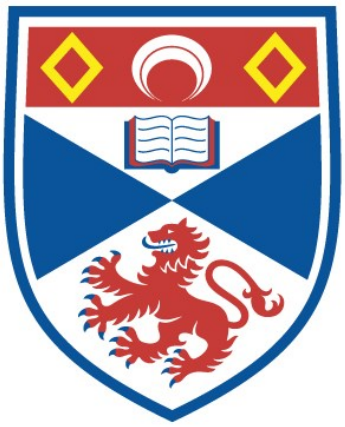
EXCELLENCE IN SCOTTISH CHURCH MUSIC

William Stevenson

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews



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Excellence in Scottish Church Music

by

William Stevenson

A thesis submitted for the degree of Ph.D

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August 2003

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Excellence in Scottish Church Music

ABSTRACT

Two propositions are advanced in the present study: firstly, national, not theological, attitudes have been the main influence on Scottish church music from the earliest days to the present; secondly, the present vitality of Scottish music can be traced back to a 19th-century search for musical excellence in church services by clergy, precentors and organists.

Until the 19th century Scottish church music reflected a national indifference to music in general. Neither in pre-Reformation nor post-Reformation times is there completely convincing evidence of high-quality secular musical activity before a brief, if brilliant, period in Edinburgh during the late 18th century. Improvements in the national awareness of classical music came as a result of sweeping changes the Scottish churches had to make when they confronted the scientific and philosophical revolutions of the 19th century. Despite some resistance on the part of congregations, music came to be seen as a way of emphasising confidence and solidarity in the Christian faith. Thereafter more and more expert musicians were attracted to work in Scottish churches with long-term benefits for the churches themselves and for the community in which many of then worked as teachers and administrators. With a greater awareness of the potential benefits of music making, Scottish church and school soon began to regard musical excellence not only as desirable but also as a *rationale* - excellence equals truth. The pursuit of excellence on the part of leading clergy and church musicians from the late 19th century to the present, which has done so much for the musical health of the nation, has recently given rise to increasing concerns about accessibility. These concerns have fundamental implications for the music of the Scottish Church.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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I am deeply grateful to Dr Ian Bradley for giving me the opportunity to embark on a study of this nature and for his friendly and constructive advice as Supervisor. From my friend and colleague, Dr David Smith and my wife, Lorna, I have had continuous support and encouragement and I cannot understate how much I owe to them.

William Stevenson

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Excellence in Scottish Church Music

Definitions

The Scottish Church

Although most of the examples in the text are drawn from the established Church of Scotland, where it seems useful references to other Scottish churches are made.

Classical Music

In this study both secular and sacred "serious" or "art" music from all periods is described as classical music.

Modern Music

Likewise all non-classical music - not only that in popular styles - from whatever period is described as modern music.

Hymn Books

The three editions of the Church Hymnary are referred to as *CH, RCH* (Revised Church Hymnary) and *CH3* (Church Hymnary Third Edition). Similarly Songs of God's People is described as *SGP*, Common Ground as *CG* and the English Hymnal as *EH.*

Excellence in Scottish Church Music.

Introduction

Two propositions are advanced in the present study: firstly, national, not theological, attitudes have been the main influence on Scottish church music from the earliest days to the present; secondly, the present vitality of Scottish music can be traced back to a 19th-century search for musical excellence in church services by clergy, precentors and organists.

To emphasise how crucially important the 19th-century search for musical excellence in the Scottish Church was to the present health of Scottish music, the first three chapters of this study seek to demonstrate just how poor Scottish music had been in comparison with other European countries, especially England.

In Chapter 4 the present study argues that music was never seen as having a significant role in the Church until changing circumstances - in particular the need for solidarity following various mid 19th-century crises - forced the Church literally to 'change its tune'.

Chapters 5 and 6 chronicle the hostility of congregations to both an increased role for service music and the introduction of organs. Evidence suggesting that musical progress in 19th-century and 20th-century Scottish church music was due to influential clergy and church leaders despite, rather than because of, congregational wishes is reviewed in Chapter 7.

The "inevitability" of the Church having to accommodate the accessible in its music, is discussed in Chapter 8.

Chapter 9 considers the relevance of excellence to the 21st-century's "accessible" church music.

Excellence

Throughout this study excellence is taken to be an adherence to the highest standards of musical craftsmanship and an active engagement with current musical idioms. Accordingly, in the following chapters neither highly accomplished pastiches such as William Dyce's two motets in Palestrina style,[1] nor poorly constructed modern songs with arbitrarily chosen harmonies and inept bass lines,[2] are considered excellent.

Despite the careful separation of excellence and innovation in many educational establishment mission statements,[3] in the arts, at least, the latter is rated so highly that it might be properly considered a part of excellence. There is considerable truth therefore in the aphorism "technology improves; art changes." In a Scottish context innovation might be a slightly two-edged sword however. Even if Robert Carver's music was performed - there is no conclusive proof that it was - the music of his senior by forty years, Josquin Desprès was considerably more innovative. Today Josquin's *Ave Maria,* for example, is a popular choir item that still retains the freshness and vitality which made it a 15th-century 'best seller' while Carver's music seems to be the preserve of the specialist early music ensemble and afficiando listener. It would be a little harsh to dismiss Carver's music as lacking in excellence because it was out of date when it was written and very few people wish to either sing or listen to it now. Nevertheless once the possibly too rose-tinted spectacles of some musical commentators are removed, the pre- and immediate post-Reformation musical scene in Scotland, of which Carver was by far the most distinguished ornament, can only be regarded as being singularly lacking in excellence - however defined.

The pursuit of excellence can be thought of as "dynamic" - a means of promoting energy and commitment in any area of endeavour. Walford Davies's description of music festival competitors 'pacing each other on the road to perfection' is a particularly happy depiction of excellence as a "dynamic" in music. Despite its very late arrival the impact musical excellence as "dynamic" made in Scotland is dramatically illustrated by the importance late 19th- and early 20th-century churchmen placed on striving for the best:

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[1] See page 26
[2] See page 234
[3] e.g. Saltire - the department which monitors the quality of teaching and research in the University of St Andrews.

> It is only becoming that we should make [the ordering of music in the church] the very best we can offer.[4]

Excellence as "dynamic" is even more clearly expressed in the music and words of the three editions of the *Church Hymnary*. The following *apologia* for *CH3* is equally apposite to at least its *RCH* predecessor and possibly to *CH* as well:

> The worship of the Christian Church is living and dynamic, so the compilation of a hymn-book, setting forth the profound New Testament understanding of the Gospel, of the Church and Sacraments, of God's dealings with men and His Church, and of His Church's responses, is a complex undertaking. It has to satisfy the legitimate demand that it should contain the best in words and music of all ages as well as contain the best of its own without being an artificial creation.[5]

It may well be that from the 1870s to the 1970s many Scots believed that excellence as "striving for the best" was the only way of justifying music in the church - the emotional support and togetherness congregational singing produces were hardly good enough reasons in themselves. During that time, in fact, unrealistic expectations of what can be achieved musically were frequent in Scotland.[6] One education commentator, for example, probably articulated a widely-held belief among the uncommitted musically that if there has to be music, let it be a disciplined activity and one prosecuted to a high standard:

> There is no reason why boys and girls should not be able to read music classics as they read the classics of their mother tongue.[7]

In such circumstances, excellence may well be promoted to a *rationale* - excellence actually equals truth. In the past influential church leaders have quite clearly believed that excellence should be truth - or at least a vehicle for transmitting truth:

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[4] G. Wauchope Stewart, *Music in the Church* p202
[5] T. Keir, 'Christian Hymnody', *Handbook to the Church Hymnary Third Edition*, p33.
[6] This matter is explored in the present writer's MPhil thesis, *Music in Secondary Schools: some influences on literacy and expression* [Dundee 1983].
[7] *Scottish Educational Journal*, 18 05 1920 p379 quoted in I. Macdougall, *Music in the Secondary School Curriculum* , PhD Thesis [St Andrews 1977]. What the author means by 'reading' is far from clear.

> It follows that as the spoken language must be true and faithful to the Word of God, so the musical language must also be true to it.[8]

Since the late 1970s accessibility has become a greater concern than excellence to those reponsible for ordering and delivering church music . The hymn writer and musical *animateur*, John L. Bell, for example, has emphasised the importance of engagement through the accessible.

> At the beginning of the 21st century, issues of global pollution, environmental abuse, ethnic cleansing, the development of self-awareness and self-confidence in women and people of colour, the integration of global economies, increasing ecumenical co-operation and a thousand other realities are every bit as deserving of being articulated in a new song as the issues of child mortality and slavery were in the past. But will the church allow them to find a place in worship?
>
> It is not a matter of aesthetic or liturgical taste. it is a matter of obedience to a divine command and of admitting that the old skins cannot hold new wine.

Nevertheless Bell does not see the accessible as an excuse for the second-rate or ill-considered. For him "accessibility" is not the "new excellence":

> The worship of God is not a casual thing. It is an expression of worth. That is what worship, or worth-ship means. Worship which is offered with little forethought or preparation, worship which is shoddy and badly led, is not an inconvenience to the congregation, it is an insult to the Almighty.[9]

The desire of organists and church musicians like Bell to promote musical excellence has served both Scotland and its national church well as this study hopefully demonstrates. Perhaps a continuing determination to pursue the excellent is still the wisest course for those responsible for the future direction of Scottish church music.

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[8] 'Introduction,' *The Church Hymnary Third Edition*, pviii.
[9] J.L. Bell, *The Singing Thing*, p90

Chapter 1

The Cultural Context: Scottish musical attitudes up to the late 20th-century.

Summary

Indifference to music has been endemic in Scotland from before the Reformation. Lack of enterprise and conservatism can be discerned in Scottish folk as well as classical music. Indeed where Scotland has acquired a reputation for musicality - vigorous psalm singing at the Reformation for example - it is probably more due to poets and novelists than to any evidence of actual achievement. Scottish society's attitude to music is revealed by its reluctance over the centuries to support or train musicians. In this cultural context it is hardly surprising that the Scottish Church has usually been discouraged from developing its music.

The unfashionable and uncomfortable hypothesis that the Scots are not particularly musical as a race was probably first propounded by the distinguished musical scholar Sir Richard Terry (1865-1938) in his introduction to Henry Farmer's *Music in Medieval Scotland*:

> In fact, music in Scotland does not, to my mind, seem to have stood on the same solid basis as other forms of culture. The pursuit of learning in Scotland has always been a national one. ... In that respect we English must take of our hats to Scotland, but so far as I have observed it would seem as though Scotland never took her music seriously enough to evolve her folk-songs; never took herself seriously enough to follow out any other musical form to its logical conclusion.[1]

Joseph Mainzer's 1844 comments - which may well accurately describe much congregational singing from early Reformation times to the advent of the organ in the later 19th century - are equally unflattering about Scottish musicality:

> On Sunday [I attended] the service at Fort George, the Psalmody of which left me not a very pleasing recollection: the shrilling of two women and three boys, the complete

[1] R. R. Terry, 'Introduction', H. G. Farmer, *Music in Medieval Scotland*, p6.

> silence of the soldiers, produced an effect upon me not unlike that of the *ranz des vaches*[2] upon a Swiss. I remembered the singing of the Austrian and Prussian army on Sabbath-day, and I felt more than ever, the distance which lay between me and my native country.[3]

Yet "musicality" like any other human attribute can be presumed to be evenly distributed amongst all communities. Where music is especially cherished, however, families with pronounced musical abilities are likely to associate and intermarry with those improvements in the native "stock" to which racehorse breeders also aspire. Despite some indigenous harp and pipe families like the McCrimmons where traditions were passed from generation to generation, there has not been the encouragement and regard for meticulous musical training in Scotland which led to successful musical "blood lines" like the two hundred year German family tree culminating in Johann Sebastian Bach and his sons Friedemann, Emanuel and Johann Christian or even the three generations of musical achievement like the Purcells in England. Equally "presumable" is that without career opportunities the "musical" will not realise their potential and a static, not to say reactionary, musical climate will ensue in any classical - or folk-music tradition. Until the latter part of the 20th century, Scotland did not support its secular and sacred music in the way most of Europe has done and it would therefore be "against the odds" if work of the highest quality was ever produced, let alone on a regular basis, before then.

Where there was (allegedly) good quality secular music in the early days - at the Royal Court for example - it was frequently provided by foreigners and seemed very prone to stirring up resentment. The violent deaths of two of James IV's favourite musicians, Rogers and Cochrane, at the hands of the Earl of Angus in 1482 was not merely "one of the earliest examples of Scottish musical criticism" but a powerful indication that musicians were well advised to know their station - a lesson which David Rizzio was also to learn the hard way. It seems clear that in Scotland before and after the Reformation musicians of exceptional talent were never an élite to be treated with the respect and reverence that was usually extended to a Lassus or a Schütz at the Electoral Courts of Munich and Dresden - or to a Byrd or Gibbons at the English one. Indeed where professional musicians were employed in Scotland

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2 'ranz des vaches': air de berger, chanson pastorale suisse *Le petit Robert (troisième édition).*
3 J. Mainzer, *Gaelic Psalm Tunes,* pxix.

their usual fate was to be mercilessly exploited, as Niel Gow among others could testify.[4]

The absence of traditional "evidence" - choir books, inventories, cheque books and so on - which might have pointed to a vigorous Scottish ecclesiastical musical scene before the Reformation may be due to vandalism or misplaced puritanical zeal; but an equally valid explanation is that what has survived represents a sizeable proportion of what was actually created.[5] A seeming reluctance to accept such an hypothesis has led historians to rely heavily on assumptions:

> The achievement of Scottish Medieval [Church] music seems to have been notable but all evidence of it has been obliterated.[6]

Whether or not this particular assumption is true there does seem to be a willingness on the part of scholars to give even the smallest bit of evidence - the *Inverness Fragments* for example - pivotal significance. In the present study it is suggested that a much more reliable picture of what probably happened in pre- and early post-Reformation congregational and choral music can be drawn from modern comparisons and empirical testing - could an "average" congregation actually have had the potential to sing a particular psalm tune, for example - rather than from the limited documentary evidence that has survived, some of which, such as the musical references in Douglas' *Palice of Honour* and Abbot Myln's description of the Choir of Dunkeld Cathedral, seems to appear in every text on Scottish music. Admittedly "common sense" is a blunt weapon in historical studies, but it would be difficult to refute the likelihood, for example, that in the early 1500s the expertise to write and direct polyphonic choral music was fairly thinly spread in a country of isolated communities, poor communications and unison folk-music. Even in the capital a long-standing lack of sophistication in musical matters is suggested by the report of De Brantome on the out-of-tune rebec and fiddle playing and psalm singing which greeted Queen Mary in 1561 only a year after the closure of the Edinburgh Sang Schule.[7] The chances that a possibly equally important but

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[4] Niel Gow was expected to play hour after hour for dancing. Some of Edinburgh's most distinguished late 18th-century musicians were given refreshments in lieu of fees when they played for Harmony at Edinburgh's Lodge Kilwinning.

[5] Few autograph scores by leading Tudor/Jacobean composers lasted the English Civil War, for example, but most of their music has survived in other sources.

[6] R. Cant, 'The Glorious House of Andrew', *Innes Review 25*, p97.

[7] J. Purser, *Scotland's Music*, p103.

considerably smaller community like St Andrews might be able to display greater expertise seems unlikely.

In fact it could be argued that Scotland first acquired a reputation for "musicality" in the 19th century through the writings of Robert Burns, Walter Scott and romantic novelists like Margaret Oliphant. In 1890, Oliphant included in her melodramatic portrayal of the 1546 Siege of St Andrews the following description of events in the cathedral (my underlining):

> We must in imagination rebuild these lofty walls, throw up again the noble piers and clustered pillars, and see the towns-folk streaming in - a crowd more picturesque in garb than any Scots assembly nowadays, with its provost and councillors in their muncipal finery: and the grave representatives of the colleges filing in to their stalls.... No doubt to these spectators, beyond even the great volume of sound which pealed upward from that vast company, in some popular hymn or ancient war-cry of a psalm, ... the stir of the languid besieging army outside .. and the guns ... of the French fleet sounded ominous in the background.[8]

It would be interesting to know the historical sources that led Oliphant to this description. Hymns being in plainsong and Latin during that period, 'popular hymn' almost seems a contradiction in terms while what she means by an 'ancient war cry of a psalm' is completely obscure. Ecstatic congregational singing during the immediate pre- and post- Reformation period, however, is almost an article of faith for many Scottish writers, not only Oliphant.

Again present-day parallels may well need to be employed if any realistic attempt is to be made at guessing what attitudes to music were really like around the time of the Reformation, even if previously standards had indeed been 'notable'. The following is offered as an example of "parallelism" in assessing a period critical for later musical developments in Scotland.

The change from selective ("élitist") to comprehensive ("democratic") school education in the early 1970s could be used as a guide to what might have happened to musical attitudes when the pre-Reformation ("élitist") old church was replaced by the ("democratic") Church of Scotland. In both cases decisions were imposed on the less than wholly convinced, and it would be surprising if at least some of the

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[8] M. Oliphant, *Royal Edinburgh*, p243.

suspicion and nervousness which greeted the introduction of comprehensive schools was not experienced by the early Scottish Reformed Church as well.

The new comprehensive schools were broadly welcomed by the Scottish teaching profession in the 1970s, if with regret that old traditions and certainties would have to go, but the surge in "control and cohesion" directives quickly led to low morale and poor standards of pupil discipline and motivation. The tone and content of the following, written in 1694, is reminiscent of 1970s curriculum circulars where 'recommend' was also to be understood as an instruction rather than a suggestion:

> Therefore as the General Assembly doth hereby appoint that this incongruous way [singing Psalms in English] of worshipping God shall be hereafter forborne, so they recommend to all congregations and families who worship God in the Irish language, to make use of the said Paraphrase therein...[9]

Comprehensive schools strongly altered attitudes towards class and extra-curricular music. Where in a selective or independent school a vigorous programme of choral and orchestral music can be seen by staff and pupils as both evidence and expression of corporate pride, in a comprehensive it has often became extremely "uncool" for a pupil - particularly a male one - to be seen to have a commitment to choirs or classical musical instruments. The lengths to which male pupils (including in the past the present writer's own) have to go to hide the fact that they learn musical instruments or sing in a church choir demonstrates that in the anti-élitist "typical comprehensive" the artistic is "unvirile".[10] In the 16th century many educated male members of the new Church of Scotland may well have shared a similar reluctance to exhibit musical inclinations publicly - an Act of Parliament was required to encourage them to even come to services equipped with a psalter.[11]

Established 16th- century Scottish church musicians may also have experienced the emotions of selective school music teachers previously secure in their personal professionalism and (frequently!) the confidence of their pupils when they were presented with a radical new agenda. In the 1970s some music teachers, as despondent as Andrew Wood about the possibility that 'music was likely to perish

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[9] 'Acts of the General Assembly 1694', quoted in J. Mainzer, *Gaelic Psalm Tunes*, pxxiv.

[10] The musical disenfranchisement of young male string players in particular can be seen in the ranks of the national youth orchestras. In recent years the number of male violinists in the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland has ranged from half a dozen to one.

[11] M. Patrick, *Op.Cit.*, p51.

from the land',[12] bowed to the "futility" of the new situation and "gave up the unequal struggle" as Millar Patrick assumes the composer David Peebles did:

> He could have little enthusiasm for those "beggardly elements" its tunes, which represented an immeasurable descent from the splendours of the cathedral music in which he had long been engaged.[13]

Apart from his advancing years, Peebles' reluctance to set psalm tunes could just as likely have arisen from the realisation that his arrangements would probably never be performed as much from regret at the passing of the old musical order which, this study suggests, may not have been particularly splendid anyway. Perhaps like many a comprehensive music teacher in the 1970s, Peebles was prepared to change tack in a populist era - after all psalm tunes were "state-of-the art" in tonal music - only to find that attempts at *rapprochement* with the "mixed ability" met with little response when it came to singing.

However unproductive drawing parallels between the introduction of the comprehensive school and the Reformation may be, the probability that major institutional changes are likely to have a deflating rather than an inspirational effect on music - particularly if it had not been in a strong state previously - cannot be ignored. Early Reformation congregations singing tricky new psalm tunes with hearty endeavour, if not necessarily great artistic success, therefore seems as unlikely as vigorous classroom singing of the "accessible" and "relevant" was in most comprehensives.[14]

Of course, the rejection of carefully prepared liturgical music and the embracing of the ultra-plain by Knox and other Reformers may well have been just a tactic in demonstrating the new Scottish Church's independence and Protestant "soundness". More pressing than indulging in such "point scoring", however, was the need to direct limited resources to immediate concerns.

> The Kirk was able eventually to gain the support of the state for its programme. In a series of Acts of the Scottish Privy Council and Parliament in 1616, 1633, 1646 and 1696,

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[12] *Ibid.*, p58.
[13] *Ibid.*
[14] Within five years of most Scottish schools becoming comprehensives, music teachers were encouraged [i.e. instructed] by the Inspectorate to drop class singing altogether.

> heritors (local landowners) were taxed in each parish to maintain a school and a suitably qualified master.[15]

Inevitably an extensive programme of change is almost guaranteed to have casualties, particularly when money is short. With much of the pre-Reformation Church's wealth in private hands and an ambitious programme of parochial reform in operation possibly later commentators should not be surprised at the low profile music was forced to adopt in Scotland from the late 16th century onwards. Millar Patrick obviously sympathised with the Reformers' dilemma over priorities:

> The Reformers wisely aimed at encouraging the people to sing. They recognized that whereas there are some things 'so necessarie that without the same thair is no face of ane visible Kirk', there are others less strictly essential, and among these was the singing of psalmes, for 'in some churches, the psalmes may be conveniently sung, in utheris, perchance they can not'.[16]

Nevertheless, however sympathetic, one is entitled to wonder if a genuinely "musical nation" would have tolerated a poverty-stricken musical regime in its national church for so long. If not in the immediate and difficult post-Reformation period, at least after the Settlement of 1688 some evidence of musical development on the Grant/Channon model of the 1750s might have been expected. This movement to improve congregational singing for some time foundered on antipathy, not from disapproving church or town authorities who actually started employing musicians to teach psalmody,[17] but from congregations. It is also significant that when music was becoming more "morally acceptable" in Victorian Scotland (mainly through the (church) schools providing singing classes) none of those "splinter groups" to which the Scottish Church had become notoriously prone showed any initiative whatever in using music as an evangelical tool. Indeed probably the first people to use music in a Scottish evangelistic situation were the Americans Moody and Sankey in the 1870s. In England "splinter groups", like the Methodists (who in fact originally saw themselves as loyal members of the Church of England), embraced hymn singing with tremendous verve when metrical psalmody was still the "authorised praise" of the English Parish Church. While the novelist Thomas Hardy was one of the few intellectuals with anything good to say

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15 T. M. Devine,*The Scottish Nation 1700-2000* p92.
16 M. Patrick, *Op. Cit.*, p50.
17 For example, Cornforth Gibson at Edinburgh, Thomas Moore in Glasow. M. Patrick, *Op. Cit.*, p161.

about the 18th-century Church of England west gallery bands, the fact these ensembles were tolerated for so long also speaks of a musical enterprise and a generosity of spirit which was not found north of the Border.

In the early part of the 19th century the Relief Church was possibly more liberal musically than the Church of Scotland, but the limits of its tolerance were closely defined and it never became an "engine house" for church music on the Methodist or Independent Baptist model despite its willingness to accept hymns. The introduction of an organ into Roxburgh Place Relief Chapel, Edinburgh was seemingly a great success according to the "pro-music" *Scotsman*:

> The whole congregation joined in the worship and the organ gave full harmony and force to the power of the human voice which is indispensable to the genuine affect of sacred music.[18]

The illwill it provoked in the rest of the Relief Presbytery however, immediately led to demands for the instrument's removal. The adoption of the organ by the Scottish Presbyterian Churches was in fact spearheaded by the established Church of Scotland in the 1860s, not by one of the smaller churches which, far from being innovative, were 'generally reported to be more austere than the establishment'.[19]

The probable indifference towards music among many in the Scottish Episcopal Church is also suggested by the similarity in the problems over organs and organists[20] in the first part of the 19th century which later the Presbyterian Churches were to also experience. Only in the brief but brilliant period of St Mary's Cathedral Choir, Edinburgh - under Arthur Oldham in the 1960s - did the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland show any more commitment to music as a stimulating force in liturgy than the Protestant Churches.

Nevertheless thanks to 18th- and 19th-century novelists and poets, Scotland has become a land of music and romance which European composers from Beethoven to Berlioz celebrated in everything from song to tone poem - almost certainly exaggerating the country's musical fecundity - in the process. For example, it is difficult to envisage the 19th-century *Viennese Waltz* originating anywhere other than Vienna yet the contemporary *Schottisches* and *Ecossaises* do not seem to enjoy

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[18] *Scotsman* , 21 01 1829.
[19] *Ibid.*
[20] See Chapter 5.

even the most tenuous connections with their eponymous host. This is not to say, of course, that Scottish music did not benefit from this "second hand" glamour. From 18th-century 'piano sonatas with folk-tune rondo finales, folk-song slow movements, even folk-song second subjects'[21] to late Victorian "characteristic pieces", "Scottish music", however synthetic, may well have played a part in the country's late 19th-century musical renaissance which was to produce a small group of distinguished musicians like Drysdale, MacCunn, McEwen and Mackenzie.

If the pursuit of classical music has always been somewhat half-hearted, the variety and quantity of Scottish folk music might presume a high degree of spontaneous musicality which requires no literary justification or promotion. On inspection, however, a vision of Scotland as the repository of one of the "grandest folk traditions in Europe" has to be seriously qualified. Many of the folk traditions come from Ireland, a fact that was early realised:

> The General Assembly of this national Church taking into consideration that there is a complete Paraphrase of the whole Psalms in Irish metre, approven and emitted by the Synod of Argyle who understand the Irish language...[22]

Care anyway needs to be exercised in discriminating between what is sociologically and anthropologically significant and what is valuable or seminal in a country's artistic development. In early times music played a vital part in work, day-to-day living and in the expression of values and beliefs in many, if not all communities; crucial insights into how these communities operated can be obtained from such music that has survived. The similarities which Béla Bartok noted between the 'well-known rugged rhythm to many Hungarian pieces' [which] 'incidentally ... seems to be used also in Scotch folk melodies'[23] might well open up intriguing possibilities for anthropological and ethno-musicological investigation. However revealing such research might be, there is no absolute guarantee of artistic value in the actual music of either country. The ultimate artistic importance of Hungarian folk music may well turn out to lie in the impetus it provided for native composers like Bartok and Kodaly to "re-invent" their compositional style in the face of what they considered decadent international romanticism.

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[21] D. Johnson, *Music in Lowland Scotland*, p196.
[22] Extract from the *Acts of the General Assembly*, 1694, quoted in J. Mainzer *Op. Cit.*, pxxiv.
[23] B. Bartok, 'The relation between folk music and art music', B. Suchoff, *Béla Bartok Essays*, p384.

Judging folk music by criteria other than those established by major composers and performers runs the risk of patronising and exploiting native traditions for not always altruistic commercial and academic purposes. The sound of the didgeridoo, for example, is evocative and significant for not only Aboriginal, but for all Australians (including those who have not treated the country's original inhabitants with much respect). Indeed the didgeridoo is now used to "place" Australia in film and TV soundtrack in the way that for decades the accordion has "placed" Paris, or the bagpipes, Scotland. Without a knowledge of, and sympathy for, Australian Aboriginal culture however, the didgeridoo is debatably a "musical instrument" at all. Like the great musicologist, Donald Tovey, who categorised certain musicians as 'Interesting Historical Figures' perhaps national musics need to be divided into those which are interesting from an ethno-musicological viewpoint and those which have produced music and musicians of the highest quality. Possibly a Victorian intellectual robustness needs to be employed when any national music is studied, however "politically incorrect" such an approach is today. At least some modern listeners would share one 19th-century commentator's reservations about Scottish Highland bagpiping. It can be doubted that he found the music "interesting" let alone "artistic":

> [McCulloch] ... classifies Highland music under the two grand heads of pibrochs and simple airs, the former being distinguished by a very irregular character without time and accent, and often scarcely embracing a determined melody, with a train of complicated and tasteless variations, adding confusion to the original air; while the latter are usually of a plaintive description, divisible into a regular number of accented bars, often in a minor key, and presenting very little variety. One peculiar characteristic of nearly all these simple airs is their adaptability to either slow or quick time, constituting, as they frequently do, the ordinary dance-music of the country, there being no esssential difference between the reel and the pathetic air.[24]

Unsympathetic though this analysis may appear, it is musically "accurate" at least to the extent that the *piobaireachd* is a series of stereotyped variations and the Strathspey is a development of the bagpipe slow air. The general conservatism of Scottish bagpipe music has continued to cause concern to its admirers - at least until recently:

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[24] G. Seton, *St Kilda*, p202.

> As in the case of the *piobaireachd*, pipe band music has, since the 19th century, dwelt in a world regulated by competitions and institutions... Influenced by the mid 20th-century folk revival, and partly in reaction against this regulated world, pipers began composing a significant body of new tunes which break rules concerning finger patterns, variation forms and also introduced new rhythmic ideas.[25]

One of the cornerstones for the belief that Scottish folkmusic is particularly interesting and valuable lies in the perceived richness and variety of Gaelic song. Collinson offers the different "positions" of the pentatonic scale frequently used in them as one item of evidence.[26] The usefulness of such categorisations seems questionable. A comfortable range for a singer - usually an octave - is going to be set by the opening phrase: a tune starting *s l d* is probably going to have *s'* or *l'* as its highest note while one starting on *d r m* will have *d'* or *r'*. An unaccompanied singer will select a lower pitch for *d* in the latter tune more for practical reasons than for tessitura and effect. All this is not to gainsay the tunefulness of many Gaelic airs but it has to be noted that of all melodic formulae the pentatonic is the easiest to manipulate. As was pointed out more than two centuries ago, even the most unsophisticated can come up with a passable "Gaelic tune" using only the black notes of the piano - particularly if a "scotch snap" or two are introduced:

> Mr Miller expressed an ardent ambition to be able to compose a Scots air. Mr Clarke, partly by way of joke, told him to keep to the black keys of the harpsichord, and preserve some kind of rhythm, and he would infallably compose a Scots air.[27]

A suspicion that the comfortably formulaic has contributed to the acceptance of "Gaelic tunes" based on the pentatonic scale or double tonic harmony is difficult for at least some musicians to avoid. One of the most successful of all pop tunes, *Mull of Kintyre*, could be taken as a highly-effective modern essay in *Skye Boat Song* style where pentatony is subtly organised to fit into "easy-listening" tonal rather than modal harmony for example.

Conversely where Gaelic tunes are idiosyncratic and irregular they seem either to be destined for the archives or oblivion:

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[25] F. Collinson and P. Dusenberry, *New Grove Vol 22* ,p216.
[26] F. Collinson, 'The native idiom' *The traditional and national music of Scotland* p4
[27] D. Johnson, *Op. Cit.*, p188. (Clarke wrote the basses for the *Scots Musical Museum*).

> There are signs however that, what with the influence of the more conventional choral singing to be heard on the radio, and the tacit assumption of its being the model for all to copy; what with the conscientious but regretted zeal of musical instructors in the highlands to 'reform' the singing of the musical congregations; and above all perhaps, with the meticulous choir-training of the Mod choirs on non-indigenous methods in the midst of the Highlands themselves, this ages-old grace-noting style of psalm-singing is on its way out.[28]

Music in whatever context it is performed seems to require change and development if it is to retain its vitality for contemporary listeners. It is surely significant that well-known modern masters of non-European classical music like Ravi Shankar (b1920) have incorporated Western disciplines into their music.[29] Shankar as a young man 'contributed to the development of new technical practices on the sitãr' and:

> came to know and hear many of the great composers which would help him to bridge cultural gaps between India and other nations in his adult years.[30]

The small amount of cross fertilisation from folk to classical music in Scotland is noteworthy when such a process was a long-standing feature in European music elsewhere. European classical music may have quickly left its roots in folk music, but it was still heavily influenced by such things as dance forms until recently. The 18th-century *sonata da camera* was based on dance forms, while the *Polonaise* and *Mazurka* were to be major influences on the music of Chopin as were *Hungarian and Slavonic Dances* on Liszt, Brahms, Dvorak and Kodaly among others.

While the classical musical enthusiasts of late 18th-century Edinburgh were among the first people to sponsor research into Scottish folk music, there is little evidence that this inspired native musicians to write much classical music developed from indigenous models for themselves - bar the introduction of "highland humours" into piano pieces noted above. Johnson notes the 'Italianization' of some (unaccompanied) fiddle music[31] by McGibbon, McLean, Disblair and Young but can only quote one set of 'sonatas on Scots tunes' for flute and continuo by Alexander

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[28] F. Collinson, *Op. Cit.*, p264.
[29] Regular listeners to BBC world music programmes will have noted similar processes in the folk music of other countries.
[30] S. Slaweck,*New Grove Vol 23*, p202.
[31] A three volume collection made for Walter McFarlane by David Young in 1740.

Munro - published in Paris.[32] Even the simple continuo-style basses for the songs Burns contributed to the *Scots Musical Museum* had to be done by a Durham-born Englishman, Stephen Clarke. Indeed those foreign musicians like Haydn and Beethoven who were employed to make folk-song arrangements for voice and obbligato instruments were cautioned to keep them simple and, in Dr Burney's words, to avoid 'complication and contrivance'.

Against a background of possibly no more than typical United Kingdom "musicality"[33] the disinclination of the Church of Scotland to employ professional musicians through much of its history has obviously had a major "knock-on" effect for Scottish musical life. The church has always been one of the most important employers and trainers of European musicians and the Scottish Churches' abrogation of this responsibility since the Reformation has obviously been detrimental to the development of music in the country as whole.

Where main-stream European domestic instruments were adopted in 16th- to 18th-century Scotland little musical growth seems to have materialised - a circumstance that can only in part be traced back to the church however. Some highly interesting early keyboard music by William Kinloch, Duncan Burnett and others, for example, does not appear to have inspired the sort of vigorous native school that might have been expected had Scotland's Sang Schules operated effectively. Although run with ecclesiastical needs in mind the Sang Schules - while they lasted - presumably also reflected national attitudes to music. Their inability to produce competent keyboard players (Burnett was in fact Master of the Glasgow Sang Schule) and composers - surely priorities in a lively tradition of musical pedagogy - is therefore as much a national failure as a church one.

Outwith a small coterie of country house enthusiasts and the members of some city Music Clubs, nor did the arrival of the violin in 18th-century Scotland precipitate much of an engagement - let alone a long-standing one - with the latest European ideas in classical string music. Again this is something for which the church could hardly be held responsible. Far from being regarded as a classical instrument, the violin seems to have been most usually employed as a handy and cost-effective

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[32] D. Johnson, *Op. Cit.*, p117.

[33] Bagpipes, fiddles and songs - also often in Gaelic as well as English - may be found throughout the UK. Northumberland, for example, had its pipes and songs - not to mention a major centre of classical music in Newcastle before Edinburgh became seriously engaged with contemporary musical culture in the late 18th century.

medium for rendering traditional vocal, harp and pipe music for dancing. When the instrument was found in the concert room the sobriquet "Fiddling Tam" applied to Thomas Erskine, 6th Earl of Kellie, one of Scotland's most distinguished composers, does not suggest much respect for the "classical-music" violin - or the Earl's musical leanings. Although the Church of Scotland probably disapproved of violin music, it was not actually proscribed by the church authorities, so again national attitudes must take at least some responsibility for the marginal Scottish interest in classical music for the instrument.

Purser suggests that the Scottish reluctance to realise its musical potential was part of a European "conspiracy":

> Why this lack of major works from a country capable of producing so many great writers and thinkers such as Thomson, Smollett, Ramsay and Hume, and great painters such as Ramsay the younger and Raeburn? The answer is simple enough. To be a painter or a writer was respectable. To be a musician was to be a servant, Mozart virtually destroyed himself breaking out of that servitude.[34]

Mozart is probably not an especially good example to illustrate such a hypothesis, since he died in debt during a period of ill health in a career where he had enjoyed "super-star" status for much of the time and which was to continue in death - Prague was thrown into shock and mourning when it learned of his passing. Nor did worries over servitude seem to have held back composers from poor backgrounds in European countries when they contemplated a musical career. In fact music could be the gateway to a gratifying life style as Haydn and Gluck demonstrated - the former's father was a wheelwright, the latter's a forester. Many other musicians from straitened circumstances also had very rewarding careers in worldly as well as artistic terms. Proving that this was a universal truth, a Scottish composer of humble pedigree like James Oswald was well able to look after himself financially, though, as with Haydn and Gluck, he had to leave home to do so (in Oswald's case to London).

Scotland's general reluctance to encourage classical music until the late 19th century may not reside in lack of social status for its providers, absence of aristocratic patronage, a disapproving church and so on, but in something so simple as that, having languished in an "undeveloped state" since well before the Reformation,

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[34] J. Purser, *Op.Cit.*, p194.

music of whatever complexion was found trivial and vulgar by "educated" Scots. Such a "provincial attitude" to music was not unique to Scotland, it has to be said:

> When Music, heavenly maid, was young in the present century [the nineteenth], she had few votaries in academic Oxford. The traditions of the place were against her: to be musical was bad form.[35]

An "educated" person today whose only listening experience is through BBC Radio 1 might well be very tempted to regard music as something rather "crass" and only appropriate for the "unsophisticated". Probably before the piano became an icon - and a seminal force[36] - in late-Victorian culture many Scots would only have heard professional music in dances, "Harmonies" at Masonic Lodges and, if prepared to risk the disapproval of the "moral majority", the Theatre - Radio 1 equivalents if ever there were. The convivial in racy ambiences - even the Music Clubs with eccentrics like the Earl of Kellie to the fore may have been regarded as just a little *risqué* - and the moribund in church probably gave most music in pre-Victorian Scotland a reputation which jazz often had until recently - something possibly quite skilful and fun on occasion, but always highly suspect socially and morally.

One of Scotland's most distinguished early 19th-century personalities illustrates the wariness of the educated towards music both in and out of the church. This is William Dyce RA (1804-1862) who was born in Aberdeen and educated at the local Grammar School and University and who was to have a distinguished career as artist, administrator and musical *animateur.*

Dyce's impressive musical abilities probably came from his mother's side. She was the daughter of J C Chalmers who edited and printed the *Aberdeen Press* newspaper. J C Chalmers, like his father (the Chalmers of the *Twenty Church Tunes* who brought the book's probable musical editor, Alexander Tait to Aberdeen to run the Aberdeen Music Society and to be Organist of St Paul's Episcopal Chapel of Ease), was a talented musician and sometime Precentor at the West Parish Church[37] (itself a little unusual for a leading citizen in that era). Regardless of his presumably obvious musical abilities, Dyce seems to have had to teach himself the keyboard.

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[35] W. Tuckwell, *Reminiscences of Oxford,* p69.

[36] The *East of Fife Record,* for September 28, 1888, carries comprehensive advertisements by two major Scottish firms - Methven Simpson and Wood and Co - for pianos and harmoniums. Presumably these firms did so because they anticipated sales in the fishing communities of the area.

[37] See Appendix, p249, for details of Dyce's early life as suggested by local archival material.

Today it would be inconceivable that a musical child in a lively intellectual family would have to teach himself an instrument. It is reasonable therefore to infer that Dyce's musical ambitions met with the same disquiet as his artistic ones. No more than in Oxford can the hard time the musical 'votaries' experienced in Aberdeen be exclusively blamed on the church. Significantly in later life when he had established a position of major influence in Church of England musical circles and had presumably rid himself of any Church of Scotland attitudes to music, Dyce was still to query whether or not someone of his intelligence and ability should have devoted his talents to "art".[38] It can only be concluded that in Dyce's day, an able Scotsman did not waste time with the "peripheral". Dyce had been a sufficiently gifted all-round intellectual to be quickly accepted into the William Gladstone circle, both as a leading artist/educational administrator and as a useful singer at musical *soirées*[39] when he first moved to London to become Director of the Art School - the latter surely providing him with early - and surely conclusive - proof that in at least some English circles the arts could indeed be a suitable activity for a gentleman.

Dyce's church music activities included making a fine and beautifully produced edition of Merbecke's *Order of Daily Service*, the leadership of the Motet Society, adapting Palestrina, composing, writing articles on music 'derived from ancient Roman and Greek sources'[40] and being the first British scholarly editor of plainsong.[41]

The Dyce edition of Merbecke which insisted on flexible "plainsong rhythm" and which included a short movement (the Response to the Ten Commandments) in appropriate style which he had to compose himself has become the definitive version of this music. Merbecke, in the Dyce version, continues to be used,

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[38] Dyce's autobiography claims that 'He was intended for one of the learned professions; but subsequently devoted himself to art'.

[39] Letter from Gladstone to Dyce:

> We have some music on Wednesday evening. I do not know that it will be very well got up, but perhaps you will do us the favour to come if you do not happen to be otherwise engaged.

Dyce Papers, p385. The letter's tone suggests that Gladstone had a high regard for Dyce's musicianship.

[40] M. Pointon, *William Dyce 18006-1864: A Critical Biography*, p72.

[41] Dyce's method of fitting words of the English Psalter to Gregorian Tones has become "standard practice" as has his free rhythmic interpretation of Merbecke's *Booke of Common Praier Noted* (where note values are treated in plainsong fashion). His treatment of psalm prosody where two words like *sore afraid* are set as if they were one in Latin - *pullulant* - has provided an elegant and almost universal solution to the claims of the ancient chant and those of the English words for precedence.
B. Zon, *The English Plainchant Revival*, p276, refers.

sometimes exclusively, for Holy Communion in many Scottish Episcopal and other Anglican churches.

In most of his musical activities Dyce reveals a narrowness of sympathy which seems hardly fair to blame on the Church of Scotland which he had left by his late teens - assuming of course that he had ever been a member of it - but which may well have been the result of what this study suggests was a deep seated Scottish ambivalence towards classical music. Dyce dismissed the music of Rossini, Bellini and Donizetti as 'claptrap', for example, while admitting to being 'seduced' by Mozart[42] though not to the extent of tolerating his music in Salisbury Cathedral.[43] It seems highly unlikely that someone who could produce monographs on church ceremonial - *The Form and Manner of Laying the Foundation Stone of a Chapel* (1843) and *Notes on the Altar* (1844) - could be opposed to operatic music simply because of a Church of Scotland upbringing!

Dyce's well-meaning but unsatisfactory editorship of music from the golden age of church polyphony - in particular that of Palestrina, for example, reveals a "pig-headed" streak which, again, could hardly be attributed to the Church of Scotland but which might well be ascribed to the independence of the Scottish 'lad o' pairts' who regarded his own judgement as good as anybody's - even in music.

The records[44] of the Motet Society, the musical wing of the Cambridge Camden (later Ecclesiological) Society founded and led by Dyce, show that six of his Palestrina editions were performed. Dyce's underlay is nearly always "unstylish" - particularly at suspensions - even when it is perfectly possible to accommodate the usually wholly inappropriate English texts effectively.[45] The result is bumpy and uncomfortable and it is difficult to believe that any choir could have got satisfaction from singing these ungrateful adaptions.[46] One suspects that it would never have

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[42] *Dyce Papers*, pp423 and 445.

[43] His friend, A Beresford Hope, quipped that Dyce was needed 'to eject Mozart and *sui generis* from Salisbury Cathedral'. *Dyce Papers* quoted in Pointon *Op. Cit.*, p73.

[44] Quoted in D. Adelmann, 'Appendix', *The Contribution of Cambridge Ecclesiologists to the Revival of Anglican Choral Music. 1839-1862, p218.*

[45] See Appendix page 280. Dyce possibly had Archbishop Cranmer's edict of one syllable per note in mind but this still would not have prohibited a more sensitive underlay, The possibility that Dyce worked from scores without words cannot be discounted, but if Goss could underlay his music stylishly there seems no reason why Dyce could not do so either. Renaissance English composers underlaid English texts in the same way as the composers of Latin Church Music, which should surely have alerted Dyce to his unsatisfactory methods.

[46] The brilliant choir-trainer Frederick Helmore probably would have been unable to agree that:

occurred to Dyce to discuss such matters with professional musicians - the only composer with whom he seems to have had any dealings in fact was the rather undistinguished Sigismund Neukomm (1778-1858).[47] Neither Thomas Helmore (1811-1890), possibly 'a musician of limited attainments'[48] nor the antiquarian Edward Rimbault (1816-1876)[49] who were leading lights with Dyce in the Motet Society were typical London musicians or indeed typical London church musicians.

It is especially instructive to compare Dyce's attempts at recreating Renaissance polyphony in his own compositions with those of his more practical - and professional - contemporary John Goss (1800-1880), Organist of St Paul's Cathedral, London.

Two Dyce motets seemed to have survived: *O God thou art my God* and *In thee O Lord have I trusted* [50]. Both are competent exercises in Renaissance counterpoint despite two tenor parts which tend to be placed rather high - a risky, if stylistically acceptable scoring (two alto parts were more usual in 5-part textures) for anyone hoping for performances by even very competent parish choirs. Neither of them appear to have been performed at the Motet Society and one would be surprised to learn they were ever performed in public - their difficulty and awkward underlaying would have discouraged even the most adventurous and expert choir. Dyce's reluctance to develop a personal style in his own compositions is also disappointing when a Mendelssohn or even a Goss could make the ideals of renaissance counterpoint live again in the 19th century.

Goss's masterpiece in renaissance style, *If we believe,* demonstrates that being undoctrinaire and practical (he uses the organ for example) not only encourages

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> ... if Dyce had achieved no eminence as a painter, he would have a secure place in musical history as the individual first responsible for making good music in inexpensive but well-produced editions available to clergy, organists, choirs and ordinary church goers.

R.Turbet, 'William Dyce' *The Aberdeen University Review*, Autumn 1996 p466.
When a reprint of James Burn's *Ancient Anthems and Services* was proposed Helmore commented that 'Nothing of that kind seems to take to the public taste'. D. Adelmann, *Op. Cit.*, p129.

[47] Neukomm enjoyed great success in the second quarter of the 19th century composing, according to *Grove,* no fewer than 48 Masses. The 'unctuous' [A. Hutchings *Church Music in the Nineteenth Century,* p17] chromaticism of his writing would surely have been deeply inimical to someone like Dyce advancing the claims of Palestrina and others.

[48] D.Webster, 'A Mass all sung to ancient music', *A Church as it should be,* p336.

[49] Rimbault 'was the foremost English musical antiquarian of the mid-Victorian years' and was a leading protaganist for the "German System' of organ building in the UK.
N. Thistlethwaite, *The Making of the Victorian Organ,* p522.

[50] See Appendix page 282.

confident performance but allows contemporary ideas of melody and harmony full sway - note the telling "un-Palestrinian" upward rising 7th at the words *May God* and the magical final bars in the relative major for example. Goss's work transcends mere pastiche and recreates the aims of Palestrinian counterpoint (including sensitive and "stylish"[51] word underlay) in a genuinely contemporary way. It could be doubted that Dyce had Goss's melodic gifts but if he had adopted the latter's pragmatic approach to reworking 16th-century counterpoint and produced straightforward and attractive works for choir and organ some of them may well have become part of the 19th-century canon - he was musical enough. The same might be said of R A Smith, the distinguished Precentor of Paisley Abbey, (later St George's, Edinburgh) had he had the opportunity - which no doubt he would have welcomed - to write for choir and organ. It has to be said that Smith had a much greater feeling for melodic shape than Dyce whose melodies, regularly and depressingly, tend to fall in pitch. Needless to say Smith was also much more practical - *How beautiful among the mountains* is eminently singable, for example - and with the increased scope that the accompanied anthem would have afforded him, he might have been expected to have done greater things.[52]

Dyce was probably the best known musical commentator in the UK to object to organs in churches,[53] but all his ideas in church music matters were expressed in the somewhat querulous and aggressive "Scottish house-style" which later anti-organ activists like Candlish and Porteus also affected.[54] The following is typical of the tone and quality of Dyce's arguments:

> Had some new Pope Marcellus (to follow the common version of the story) now arisen, and shocked with the indecencies which were practised in the church under the patronage of this, the most licentious court that ever reigned in England - had he

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[51] Goss does not change words on the discord part of a suspension.

[52] The *Scotsman* obituary suggests that Smith found the artistic climate of his day frustrating:

> Mr Smith was a candid, as well as an affectionate man, but he was unquestionably too sensitive for the place which he occupied in society.

Scotsman, 07 01 1829.

[53] q.v. Dyce's barb: 'a cathedral organ [St Paul's London?] not a hundred miles from here do its best to imitate an opera orchestra *Dyce Papers* p433 and in more scholarly mode:

> The passage alluded to [by Clement Alexandrinus]is we believe the only one in the earlyfathers which has been thought to countenance the use of instruments and for ourselves we cannot for a moment suppose that it does so.

Ibid., p472.

[54] See pages 42 and 45.

> deemed to banish all music from religious worship but the primitive ecclesiastical chant, we should probably have found Purcell, who immediately succeeded Humphrey and Blow, occupying the same place in the "Glorious company" of English musical reformers that Palestrina does among the Italians[55]

> Can there be any question that, if Mozart had been an English organist, we should have had anthems and services on the model of his Don Giovanni or Marriage of Figaro[56]

Needless to say a professional musical scholar would have taken more account of Purcell's need to express himself in the musical language of his day and would certainly have avoided somewhat juvenile conclusions[57] as to what Mozart might have done had he had an English career.

Some indication of the notoriety of Dyce's four long *Christian Remembrancer* articles, in which he attacked most aspects of English church music, can be inferred from the fact that their 'acrimony' was even regretted by his strong-stomached Victorian contemporaries:

> The Christian Remembrancer for April contains the second of a series of articles on English Church Music written with no less vigour, but we are glad to say, with far less acrimony than the first [this must be a reference to Dyce's 1841 articles which had been quoted in December 1846 p91][58]

Perhaps his largely self-taught background in both art and music (and possibly his non-Oxbridge MA degree in a social circle almost exclusively from Oxford and Cambridge) was responsible for the aggressive approach he adopted in most things he tackled, but again it may have been just a "Scottish"[59] impatience with those that did not agree with him. Whatever the shortcomings in argument and magnaminity of the *Christian Remembrancer* articles, it is highly likely that many copies of this, the leading theological journal of its time, came to Scotland and that

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55 *Ibid.*, p432.
56 *Ibid.*, p429.
57 A specialist music scholar would surely have taken Attwood's career as church and theatre composer as a basis for any speculation as to what Mozart might have done had he come to England - which was not outwith the bounds of possibility as Handel and .J C. Bach had both demonstrated.
58 *The Parish Choir*, May 1847, p138.
59 The tone of Principal Donaldson's outburst (see p82) at the proposed changes to St Salvator's Chapel in 1915 echoes that of Dyce. Some of Cedric Thorpe Davie's comments (see p92) are also *sui generis!*

Dyce's views were subsequently taken very seriously by "informed Scots" or at least used to confirm existing positions.

The appointment of distinguished and cultured English musicians like Sir John Stainer[60] to important educational positions in late 19th-century Scotland might suggest that musical attitudes in general had moved on from those of Dyce. Yet it could be suspected that usually little more than lip-service was paid to music for other than what was regarded in educational circles as its "moral" properties. Although the following comments, reported in the *Scottish Educational Journal*, were those of an ex-Patriate Welshman, Walford Davies, they are typical of the "best thinking" in Scottish musical education in the decades round the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries:

> It seems to me an even more valuable piece of work has been achieved this year, for in the little children's choirs and in the massed singing Glasgow has shown that music belongs to the little children and the common men and women, and if results which are not merely moving but perfect enough to admire can be obtained naturally from the man-in-the-street and from children in defective schools, music fills a world of its own as vast and varied as the world we look upon, and there seems no doubt that the defective children and the technically defective men and women can equally inhabit and enjoy that world.[61]

The significance leading musicians like Hugh Roberton of the Glasgow Orpheus Choir, David Stephen[62] of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust and their colleagues ascribed to Competitive Festivals perhaps illustrates the ambiguous position music

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[60] Stainer was Inspector of Music in Scottish Teacher Training Colleges and Musical Editor of the Church Hymnary. As well as being a composer he was a scholar and administrator - Professor of Music at Oxford University.

[61] H. Walford Davies reported in the *Scottish Educational Journal*, 19 12 1920, p1174 quoted in I. Macdougall, *Op.Cit.*, p222.

[62] David Stephen was a very competent composer who was adjudged worthy of an Honorary DMus from Edinburgh University in 1946. His early career was as an organist and:

> ... during the time the Trust was presenting organs to churches and concert halls Stephen was occupied in preparing specifications and superintending the installation of the instruments on which he gave the opening recitals.

'Obituary' *Musical Times* April 1946, p126. The fact that Stephen gave advice is a surprise bearing in mind Carnegie's views on churches doing their own homework . Perhaps the obituary was in error.

seems to have always enjoyed among the arts in Scotland. If the articles in the *Scottish Educational Journal* from the 19th century onwards are anything to go by, music has always had to demonstrate its "usefulness" and "character formation" potential to the influential sections of the community. Possibly music might not be able to turn the 'technically defective' into the 'effective' but it should certainly encourage "convergent" good taste and and provide moral uplift as Stephen made clear in 1914 (my underlining):

> Even considering the large number of churches affected by such a scheme [the Carnegie organ grants], the benefits have been confined to the individual congregations; there has been a lack of that cohesion and concentration of musical energy which is the basis of any scheme having for its object the musical uplifting of a community.
>
> [This was to be achieved by]
>
> I The subsidising of Colleges or Schools of Music ....
>
> II The development of Choral Music by means of grants to enable regularly constituted bodies to finance successfully Competitive Choral Festivals.[63]

The Competitive Festival was a UK wide phenomenon but was generally understood outwith Scotland as an opportunity for new talent to be heard and subjected to expert criticism and not as an exercise in social engineering or 'cohesion' - it will be noted that Stephen refers to Competitive Choral not Music Festivals.

The "utilitarian" streak in Scottish music as represented *inter alia* by the attitudes of intellectuals like Dyce and the wish for 'cohesion and concentration of musical energy' by the advocates of competitive musical festivals have encouraged the present writer to entertain considerable reservations about the importance with which Scotland's secular music was regarded from before the Reformation until fairly recently. There seems very little evidence to suggest that music was ever thought something worthwhile making sacrifices for in Scotland. Johnson points out the insecure foundations on which the classical music "explosion" in Edinburgh of the late 18th century rested:

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63 'Report' *Carnegie United Kingdom Trust*, 1914, p42.

> Certainly they [the people of Edinburgh] wanted classical music to succeed but not that well. They felt it had gone too far; they tried to retreat from the expense, the newness, the foreignness of it all.[64]

It would be surprising if attitudes had been any different two centuries before, while the inter-city rivalries in the 1930s and 1940s which delayed the formation of the Scottish National Orchestra until 1951, perhaps demonstrates that things were much the same nearly two centuries later. Many in Edinburgh - including the Town Council - were reluctant to subsidise a "Glasgow orchestra" and some thought that the recently 'deceased'[65] (as a professional ensemble) Reid Orchestra should have been the basis of any new orchestra, not the existing Scottish Orchestra with its roots in the Glasgow Choral and Orchestral Society.

However slowly and unsurely Scottish attitudes have changed, that they have done so at all - Scotland now runs four professional orchestras[66] for example - is in considerable part due to those 19th- and 20th-century clergymen, precentors and organists who were determined to improve both church and community music. As this study argues those who stood out for quality in music were often grudgingly supported by society in general and sometimes compromised by indifference and hostility, but their efforts were clearly not in vain.

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64 D. Johnson, *Op. Cit.*, p199.

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> Against the news of the Festival has to be set the decease of the Reid Orchestra. An Edinburgh Symphony Orchestra is proposed, for which a founder's Guild is in existence.

Musical Times, November 1946, p34

66 BBCSSO, RSNO, SCO and SO.

Chapter 2

The Ecclesiastical Context: Scottish attitudes to the organ and the voice.

Summary

Scotland's lack of musical excellence in its churches until the late 19th century is attributed, firstly, to the abandoning of the organ in the 16th century - an instrument which had minimal impact on European church music before the Reformation but which was central to developments thereafter, and, secondly, to a weak pre-Reformation choral tradition.

The organ in Scottish Church Music.

The organ's role as a teaching aid and as a means of disseminating the latest musical ideas has been pivotal in European church music. The centrality of the keyboard to all European classical music from the earliest days to the present is illustrated by the number of great composers who were not merely good keyboard players but unquestioned virtuosos. In fact from Handel and Bach to Bartok, Stravinsky and Shostakovich, finding a major composer who was not an outstandingly able keyboard performer is very difficult. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the great English innovators of the late 16th and early 17th centuries were usually virtuoso keyboard players themselves - Byrd, Gibbons and Tomkins for example. These composers' feeling for melody and musical organisation cannot but have been enhanced by the amount of playing and writing they did for the harpsichord and organ.[1] The absence of a lively tradition of organ playing in Scotland both before and after the Reformation is therefore a matter of some consequence.

The glorious architecture of the greatest Scottish Cathedrals and Abbeys in their pre-Reformation prime seems to promise that everything about them, including the music, was equally magnificent. Nevertheless as far as the organ is concerned, it is quite probable that the instruments in these great buildings were either very small or in some cases non-existent.[2] In the absence of any information to the contrary it

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1 - especially variations on popular tunes and dances on chord schemes like the folia.

2 It seems reasonable to conclude that Elgin [cathedral] had no organ at that time [1489].

J. Inglis, *The Organ in Scotland before 1700*, p13.

might be wise to assume that the first organ in Scotland with more than one or two stops was the 1611 Dallam instrument in Holyrood Abbey, Edinburgh.

16th-century Scottish organs could rarely - if ever - have been bigger than the organ in the portrait of William Bonskill by Van der Goes (active 1467 - died 1482)[3] and even this instrument was unlikely to be an indigenous one, since the painting was done in Flanders, and the depicted building bears no relationship whatever to Trinity College Church, Edinburgh where Bonskill was a priest. Thomas Wood's organ drawing on his Psalter is of a very similar sized instrument to the one in the Van der Goes painting. He may well have been drawing an instrument he remembered from St Andrew's Cathedral, St Andrews where indeed it might have been the main organ - after all why draw a small instrument if there had been a more splendid example in the building? The only reference to an organ in that cathedral is a 'large organ'[4] provided in the first part of the 15th century by the cathedral Prior, William Bonar (d1462) when "large" probably meant no more than non-portative, especially at that early date. The possible placing of Bonar's organ or its successors on the cathedral's Pulpitum cannot be taken to imply comprehensive instruments. The pulpitum[5] position might merely indicate that an organ placed upon it was awkward to move about at floor level and hence, if left unattended in a large public building, would be vulnerable to the thieves and vandals which were as much a feature of the Age of Faith as at any other time. The fate of a predecessor to

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[3] See page 304.

[4] R. Cant, *Op. Cit.*, p64.

[5] Dare one suggest that another organ allegedly placed on a Pulpitum, that at King's College Chapel, Aberdeen, was only moved thence to be out of the way at the Reformation? There was after all absolutely no call - and possibly no room - in pre-Reformation days for an instrument to be placed where there was already an elaborate Rood Screen and altar. The evidence for an organ loft anyhow resides in the 1529 inventory's reference to 'in solio organorum' (F. C, Eeles, *King's College Chapel, Aberdeen,* p44). However 'solio' usually means 'seat, chair, throne' and does not imply elevation. The fact that the organist was supposed to play when the choir processed into the nave might suggest it was put at floor level or on a small table/platform in the western part of the chapel. Such a position against a wall is also suggested by the comment in the previous section of the Inventory which notes 'an image [i.e.painting/icon] hanging above the organ [solium organorum] the gift of Master John Wauss former grammarian of this college'. The low elevation of the chapel and the presumable necessity of being able to see the painting above the organ both suggest that the instrument was very small indeed despite being encased in some form of panelling or 'wainscotting' and with a picture of the Virgin Mary above the pipes.

> What is puzzling to find that the rood loft is also called the organ loft. In the list of small 'tables', that is pictures, we read of 'another having the image of the Crucified hanging above the loft of the organs' followed by 'in the loft of the organs, the organsthemselves with the image of the upper part of them. This language is almost enough to suggest a second loft, but in a church arranged like this it is impossible to think of a place for it. *Ibid.*, p74.

Commonsense suggests that in this case *solio* - whatever it might have meant in normal Scottish usage - did not mean a gallery but the more usual 'seat' or 'throne'. See Appendix page 254.

the Holyrood Dallam organ illustrates the vulnerability of easily moved church equipment in the 16th century:

> In February [1562] there was a payment of £10 from the treasury to William Makdowale, the Master of Works as reward for the recovery of a pair of organs which had been carried away.[6]

This must have been in the way of a (very substantial) bribe, because if the organ had been of any size it seems inconceivable that its whereabouts would not have been generally known. This instrument cost £36 (£7 sterling) in 1557, which was £4 less than the sum required to buy 40 yards of holland (hard wearing cotton twill) - another indicator that it was very small, a regal or portative perhaps. Again the Chapel Royal, Stirling, organs seem to have been tiny (three pairs of organs, of which one was wood and the other two of pewter or lead - in other words regals) and in all probability portable.

If John Harper is right and King's College Chapel, Aberdeen in the early 16th-century contained a large instrument with 5 to 7 stops and a range of 46 notes[7] the rewards for playing it were hardly compelling. The *Fasti Aberdoneses* records that assisting the Sacristan to ring the bells in the chapel attracted the same honorarium - 'two merks yearly' as playing the organ.[8] The instrument postulated by Harper may have been a later installation, but one would still expect some reference in the extant records if it had been as substantial as he suspects. The absence of any reference to organs in the otherwise detailed St Salvator's Chapel, St Andrews Inventory would suggest that if there was an instrument in that building before the Reformation it was very small and of little or no value. It would surely be surprising if King's College Aberdeen was considerably more adventurous in its musical arrangements than its (then) grander neighbour. Other circumstantial evidence pointing to few organs with anything other than a handful of pipes is the general absence of repair bills (there are for the Scottish Chapel Royal instruments for example) and the small number of organists identified by name.

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6 Bannatyne Club, *Inventories of Mary Queen of Scots*, pixi.

7 J. Harper, 'Music and Ceremonial c1500-1560', J. Geddes, *Kings College Chapel, Aberdeen, 1500-2000* p32.

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> ... that the six choristers have four marks yearly and one to be appointed to assist the Sacrist in ringing the bells, to have beside two marks yearly that one of the Prebendaries, sub principal cantor and sacrist, to play the organ, shall have two merks yearly.

C. Innes, *Fasti Aberdoneses*, p16.

Where there were organs in England the name and even careers of the players are often known and we may suspect that this was also the case in Scotland. The organist of St Nicholas Church, Aberdeen who was enjoined to 'play upone ye organis of ye said matines, evensong and mesis as was wont to be done'[9] in 1543 was one Richard Barclay, and the names of other organists at that church are also recorded. Enough is known about another one-time organist at St Nicholas, Sir John Fethy (c1480-c1550), to suspect that he was trained outwith Scotland, while Edinburgh Town Council allowed an employee, James Lawder, to go to England and France in 1552/3 to 'get better erudition in music and playing than he has'. Inglis is able to name 29 people connected with Scottish organ playing before 1700 but no more than a dozen seem to have unassailable rights to the description "organist".[10] For two centuries of musical endeavour these numbers are decidely unimpressive - more so when to play the instrument then did not require specialist skills such as pedalling.

The fact that up to the Reformation Scottish organists were either clergy or clerks may explain this shortage of information, but since becoming ordained seems to have been regarded then as a "fall back qualification" like a school teaching diploma was until recently, there is no particular reason why the better clerical musicians should not be known. David Peebles, who arranged the music for Thomas Wood's Psalter, was a clergyman, for example.

In such Scottish churches that had organs it is therefore more than likely that they were usually tiny instruments possibly with just a handful of pipes (or free reeds) based on an - easily tuned - pentatonic scale and with no more than ceremonial functions. The same stipend for ringing the bells and playing the organ in King's College, Aberdeen may indicate that their roles were equally close![11] In England organs do not seem to have been used for accompanying or giving out the starting notes of early pre-Reformation polyphonic music, but do seem to have been employed from the late 1400s in teaching choristers and for *alternim* performance in polyphony. The paucity of comprehensive organs might therefore say just as much about the amount of polyphonic music sung in Scotland as about the performances

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[9] I. Cowan, 'The Medieval Parish Clerk', *Innes Review 17*, p39.
[10] J. Inglis, *Op.Cit.*, p85.
[11]

> A decree of Göttingen in 1486 says that at a certain place in the mass the bells shall be rung; but if there are none, the organ shall be played.

C. F. Abdy Williams,*The Story of the Organ*, p55.

of actual organ music. The omission of any references either to what he was to play or how he was to help with the teaching of the choristers in the 1550 Records of Foundation of St Mary's [Collegiate] Church, Crail hardly suggests a crucial role for the organist even in an establishment apparently determined to have high standards.[12] Elsewhere the injunction in other early 16th-century records to be able to 'play on the organ' may have implied at best no more than the ability to play by rote - as in present day flute and bagpipe bands - or the possession of some elementary competence for pedagogic purposes. Harry Wilsher records Wood's surprise in the 1560s that Peebles could 'sing what he had never sung before'[13] i.e. could read music fluently at sight. As Wood had been familiar with pre-Reformation practice at St Andrew's Cathedral, St Andrews his remark suggests that the teaching of the service music there was through the agency "of someone who can already sing or by some Instrument of Musicke, as the virginals" - or the organ.

In a country with many of its major cathedrals and abbeys isolated from large population centres it might be wise to assume that the organ, if present, was regarded and approached as a folk instrument like the clarsach - possibly with a not dissimilar repertoire. Certainly organ players who could have led choral performances, let alone provide *psalm intonations* and *alternim* verses, must have been extremely rare at best. Where an organist like Richard Barclay of St Nicholas, Aberdeen is known to have played, perhaps his repertoire at the services was no more than voluntaries or possibly "popular tunes" before and after the services - for example some of the new psalm and chorale tunes that had appeared in the *Gude and Godlie Ballatis* of 1542 and which had been probably in circulation before then. It is difficult to see how more than a very few of these or similar tunes could have entered the "common domain" in Aberdeen if they had not been performed in St Nicholas by a competent musician.

No English organ music written before 1500 has survived suggesting rather strongly that very little was produced. Whatever its antecedents might or might not have been, English organ playing did develop very quickly and impressively in the early 16th-century among a small group of exceptionally gifted musicians [Thomas Preston, John Redford and others - all London based], and we can assume that it did

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[12] The similarity between the statutes of St Mary's Biggar and Crail are striking ["standard issue"?] and Rutherford's bleak query about the former: 'Did it ever function at all as a Collegiate Church?' might well be equally apposite to both. David S. Rutherford, *Biggar St Mary's A Medieval Collegiate Kirk*, p38.

[13] H. Wilsher, *Music in Scotland*, p143.

so from a very humble base of vocal type arrangements like those in the *Buxheimer Orgelbuch* or from simple improvisations. Allowing that events in the pre-Reformation Scottish church may have quite closely mirrored those in England, and that, in fact, there was a vibrant indigenous musical scene, one would be still a bit surprised if organ playing developed as quickly and impressively north of the Border - it was clearly an esoteric activity even among talented and sophisticated musicians. If a national school of organ composition had developed in early 16th-century Scotland, evidence would surely have survived in some form or other.

One of the most frequently paraded references on early keyboard music in Scotland is Thomas Wood's comments about Fethy:

> This man was the first organist that ever brought to Scotland the curious new fingering and playing on the organs ... and the first trim organist that was ever in Scotland.[14]

The 'curious fingering and playing' almost definitely refers to contrapuntal textures, not to the use or non-use of the thumb[15] - a matter which was still unresolved nearly two centuries later.[16] The latter part of the quotation is particularly suggestive as the first trim ('well-equipped'/competent')[17] organist appearing just before the Reformation may well indicate that fluent playing from notes was rare or indeed new to Scotland in the early 16th century. Wood, whose Psalter is discussed below, seems to have been in touch with the best musicians in Scotland and is therefore somebody whose assessments can be trusted.

Organs on which notated[18] music might have been played must have been restricted to the larger towns like Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen and the metropolitan

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[14] Often quoted, probably first in H. Farmer, *Op.Cit.*, p114.

[15] Keys were frequently too short to allow the use of the thumb -see the Van der Goes painting for example.

[16]
> Undoubtedly the thumb's correct use was not fully known in his [F. Couperin's] time.

C. P. E. Bach referring to Couperin's *L'Art de toucher le Clavecin*, Paris, 1717, C. P. E. Bach, *An Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, p72.

[17] *The Oxford English Dictionary* suggests a sliding value from 'competent' to 'exceptionally gifted' for the word 'trim'.

[18] It should be noted that an organ book in an inventory such as at King's College, Aberdeen, may have given no more than the plainsong on which the organist was to improvise. There is an example of a late 15th-century "busker's guide" on the music desk of the organ in the Van der Goes painting. The facts that the angel is playing with only one hand and there is a "drone" pipe at the left hand side of the organ suggests that only a single melody line was ever performed on the instrument.

cathedral in St Andrews. (If there was organ playing "from notes" at the Chapel Royal, for example, it is surprising there are no references). Possibly some people were sad to see such organs as existed destroyed. The instrument in St Nicholas Aberdeen[19] was disposed of only after prompting from the Privy Council in 1574 which directed 'that the organis with all expiditioun be removed out of the kirk, and made proffite of to the use and support of the pure [poor]'. The frequency with which the pre-Reformation St Nicholas clergy were required to demonstrate that their chalices were still in their possession[20] may indicate there was a buoyant Aberdeen trade in recycled metal. Pipe metal, however, is an alloy of tin and lead which is more or less valueless except in organ building and the results of the sale would hardly have represented much of a windfall to the deprived. The instruction to get rid of the organ therefore seems petty and mean-minded when the congregation presumably wished to retain the instrument. In a city which might well have taken pride in its Sang Schule, the loss of an organ to which people seem to enjoy listening and which could have provided a public platform for the talented was regrettable and damaging.

In this connection it is tempting to compare the fate of Scottish organs like that of St Nicholas with those in the Netherlands as the religious and political situations in both countries were similar:

> The Alteration of 1578 put an abrupt end to the role of music in public worship with the sole exception of monophonic psalm singing intoned by a precentor. The Calvinists not only rejected chant and polyphonic music they also considered the organ a worldly instrument. The national Synod even went so far as to request the removal of organs from the churches.[21]

But in all other respects things were completely different:

> A fortunate circumstance prevented the implementation of this resolution, however: in almost all the Dutch towns joining the insurrection, either of their own volition or through being conquered, the churches with their organs became municipal property, administered by or on behalf of the magistracy. Apart from the services held on

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[19] If there was a substantial instrument in King's College, Aberdeen it is surprising that it escaped the censure of the Privy Council.

[20] On 18th April 1550 every one of the 'chaplanis of the townis foundations' were summoned to bring their 'chalesis, vestments and ornamontis thairof' for inspection by the Town Council. Spalding Club, *Extracts from the Council Register of Aberdeen, 1398-1570,* p277.

[21] F. Noske, *Sweelinck,* p3.

> Sundays, the buildings thus served worldly purposes, such as the public 'concerts'[22] given once or twice a day by the organist, whose employer was the town, not the church.[23]

Among the post-Alteration organists in Amsterdam who gave public concerts was Jan Pieterzoon Sweelinck (1562-1621). Sweelinck established a school of organ composition that was to culminate in the music of Buxtehude and Bach. Compared to any 17th-century UK instrument, the three manual and pedal Amsterdam Oudekerk organ was huge and futuristic. Nevertheless another figure almost as seminal in the development of European keyboard music was the Italian, Giralomo Frescobaldi (1583-1643), who would have been used to instruments that may not even have been as advanced as the 1611 Dallam instrument in Holyrood. Size and sophistication were clearly much less significant than the support offered to organists if quality was to be achieved - it could be doubted that either Sweelinck or Frescobaldi would have become professional musicians if they had been Scottish for example. Had the Privy Council not intervened at St Nicholas Church, therefore, a small centre of organ playing excellence might have arisen in a potentially fertile area for future development. Here is a case where musical philistinism can be firmly attributed to national mores rather than to those of its church - at least at local level.

The good a dynamic organ/keyboard tradition could have done for both sacred and secular music in Scotland is therefore yet another frustrating "if only"[24] in the history of Scottish culture. Not only was the organ central to 17th-century musical developments in general - especially continuo techniques - but it also underpinned the English Reformation's great musical success. Le Huray gives statistical evidence

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[22] It has sometimes been suggested, however, that Dutch organists were encouraged to play variations on psalm tunes to help congregations learn the melodies.

> It is often said that the psalm variations by Van Noordt and others were aimed at teaching people the melodies, Whether this can be proved in another question.

H. der Kler, 'Amsterdam 1659 Tablatuur-Boeck van Psalmen en Fantasyen', *Organists' Review August 2000*, p210.

[23] F. Noske, *Op.Cit.*, p4.

[24] Purser however believes that the 1610 *Duncan Burnett Music Book* does reveal the 'existence of a thriving school of keyboard composition in Scotland'. He also considers some of William Kinloch's keyboard music to be comparable to that of William Byrd. [Sleeve Note *Kinloche His Fantassie* ASV CD]. Be that as it may, the fact that Kinloch may have been familiar with Byrd's music - apparently he was a spy for the imprisoned Mary Queen of Scots - shows the importance of keyboard music as both an art form in itself and as a handy way of disseminating the latest musical thinking.

to back up his assertion that the large investment in organs by the English cathedrals during the later years of Elizabeth's and throughout James I's and Charles I's reigns had a catalytic effect on composition throughout the country [my underlining]:

> It cannot be entirely fortuitous, either, that many more church musicians tried their hand at composition after 1590 than before, and that a much larger proportion were from the provinces. Of the thirty-five or so Edwardian and early Elizabethan composers (c1540-1590) almost half the number were members of the Chapel Royal. Between 1590 and 1640, on the other hand, well over a hundred and twenty wrote at least something for the Anglican rites; and of these, only some thirty or so were Chapel Royal musicians.[25]

The impossibility of introducing the organ-accompanied verse-anthem to Scotland was especially damaging. Certainly the verse form had a galvanising effect on both composition and keyboard-playing standards from the Reformation onwards:

> With the development of the verse service and anthem, however, the duties [of playing the organ in the English Chapel Royal] inevitably became more arduous and the practice grew of electing Gentleman especially for their skill in organ playing.[26]

Despite its probable invention by the Catholic William Byrd, the verse-anthem was mainly a post-Reformation phenomenon and hence did not carry any "old church" baggage to offend the ultra-sensitive Protestant. As might be expected from a form with roots in the secular consort song and one which had also been greatly influenced by protestant psalm tunes the verse-anthem was attractive and accessible.

Many contemporary scholars admire mid-16th-century anthems and motets by Scottish composers like David Peebles. Writing of Peebles' *Si quis diligit me*, John Purser notes:

> This is music of peaceful and moving reassurance, with smooth flowing lines that are never without interest.[27]

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[25] P. le Huray, *Music and the Reformation in England*, p46.
[26] *Ibid.*, p65.
[27] J. Purser, *Op. Cit.*, p 98.

Whatever merits they might otherwise possess, the four-square counterpoint and indeterminate tonality of such pieces as *Si quis diligit me* represent an out-of-date contrapuntal euphony rather than a reflection of the then current trend towards tonal harmony which was to accelerate with the widespread introduction of verse-style anthems and services.

Both full and verse anthems were accompanied by the organ in post-Reformation England; the viol parts provided for many verse anthems merely reveal they were sung in domestic as well as ecclesiastical situations - another indicator of the importance of the form to both sacred and secular music. It can also be argued that the tunefulness and accessibility of the Jacobean English full anthem owed as much to the verse anthem as to earlier English or continental models. The modernity of the themes in Gibbons' full anthem *O Clap your hands together*, for example, seems much more of a piece with the melodies of his verse anthems like *This is the record of John* and *Great King of Gods* than to being an "inevitable" development of even the most tuneful and "progressive" of an earlier generation of full anthems like Tallis's *O Lord give thy Holy Spirit.*

Perhaps the two pieces ascribed to Robert Johnson in Musica Britannica XV, *Deus Misereatur* and *Com palefaced death* are not by the same composer, but the latter piece, an attractive and melodious consort song, suggests that Scottish composers could have been comfortable with the verse anthem had they had the opportunity to produce examples. The importance of the verse anthem form to Anglican Choral Music can be judged by its longevity - it was to last for over two centuries[28] - and the quality of the finest examples by composers from Orlando Gibbons and Henry Purcell in the 17th century to Samuel and Samuel Sebastian Wesley in the 19th. Indeed it could be claimed that the verse anthem saved Anglican choral music because at its lowest point in the early 19th century only the fine singing of the adult soloists in some of the Cambridge Colleges gave any credence to the genre.

The organ came to be regarded with increasing mistrust during its two centuries of absence from the national church so when the return of "instrumental music" to the Scottish Presbyterian Churches became a live issue in the mid-19th century it is hardly surprising that Dr Candlish of St George's Free Church, Edinburgh warned that:

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[28] Alfred Hollins' *Rejoice in the Lord* (1901) is in verse anthem form.

> ... if the organ is admitted [to the church] there is no barrier, in principle, against a sacerdotal system in all its fulness, against the substitution again, in our whole religion, of the formal for the spiritual, the symbolic for the real.[29]

Candlish's use of "sacerdotalism" might be understood as an up-market synonym for "encroaching Catholicism". In the 1850's, Scottish concerns at Catholic emancipation seemed to have been expressed with reasonable restraint while the social tensions caused by the large influx of Irish Catholics and Protestants were only to come later. Roman Catholic worship in Candlish's time was low-profile and organless. His objections to the "sacerdotal" organ surely can be taken at face-value. Today the presence or absence of an organ in church worship is theoretically a matter of convenience, but the instrument can still be the source of contention and those "mixed messages" which so exercised Dr Candlish. (The retention of a pipe organ or its replacement by a more "flexible" electronic instrument, for example, often reflects the churchmanship and repertoire of a congregation as much as its wealth.)[30]

There is after all some solid evidence in Candlish's hypothesis for those looking to discredit the organ. He - and many other Scottish Presbyterian clergy - would have known that the organ from its earliest days in Europe and England did have a 'sacerdotal' role when it was employed to give the choir a rest by playing certain verses of masses. canticles, psalms and other parts of the pre-Reformation liturgy. Candlish was also surely right in suspecting that once an organ is used to provide music for anything other than the psalmody, some ritual and ceremonial is bound to follow. "Setting the atmosphere" particularly with "seasonally appropriate" music in a pre-service voluntary is just the first step to an organ and choral repertoire for services based on the "catholic" church year. Music or silence after music, announcing the arrival of the minister in the pulpit puts that clergyman in a different relationship to his congregation than it would be in an organ-less church. With hindsight the vision that the organ might in some way "take-over" the Scottish Presbyterian service seems unnecessarily apocalyptic [possibly not in

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[29] G. Wauchope Stewart, *Op. Cit.*, p241.

[30] One of the most successful London Evangelical Churches, St Michael's Chester Square, installed a new mechanical-action pipe organ in 1994 which could also be played from an electrically operated console with *midi* capability to allow for "greater flexibility".

churches with huge organs dominating the sanctuary like a "Dagon in the Sanctuary"[31] but in Candlish's day it was probably not an unreasonable concern.

There were also matters of authority, patronage and priorities to worry church leaders. The first Scottish organ *cause-célèbre,* the installation of a tiny instrument in St Andrew's, Glasgow in 1807 'to assist at the weekly congregational practice of praise' resulted in complaints from the Presbytery when it was employed one Sunday to accompany the concluding Psalm. The illwill surrounding this case anticipated in some respects the tensions that were to lead to the Disruption. St Andrew's accepted that the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Council as Heritors could stop the congregation from removing pews to make room for a permanent instrument but it resented the interference into what the church considered its own affairs when 'as a matter of merely private accommodation' they introduced a chamber organ to 'help the Precentor'.[32] To emphasise that it was nothing to do with the Heritors, the minister, Dr Ritchie, 'sent two gentlemen twice in one day to request of the Lord Provost that the Civil Power might no more be seen in this business, because whatever opinion the Presbytery might form of the cause, they might, perhaps be jealous of an encroachment of the rights of a minister'.[33] As it happens the Presbytery were much more jealous of their own rights than to worry about those of one of their brethren and were quite ready to enlist the Civil Powers

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[31] H. J. Wotherspoon, 'The present state of church music in Scotland', *Transactions of the Aberdeen Ecclesiological Society,* 1891, p38.
The allusion is a little obscure - 'Dagon: The chief god of the ancient Philistines and later the Phoenicians, represented as half man half fish'. [*Reader's Digest Universal Dictionary*] Possibly Wotherspoon meant Dragon after all!

Part of the ambivalence so many feel towards the organ is the caused by the ugliness of the instruments in their churches. Robertson ascribes the aggressive central position of the organ to an imitation of earlier German practice.

> In the 18th century the Germans evolved a theory that the organ should be placed behind the preacher's back. The choir was removed from the west end and grouped in front of the organ, facing the congregation for anthems and oratorios. Holy Table, preacher and choir were said to be "in Verbindung" "in an organised composition'.

K. Robertson, *Worship in Scotland,* PhD Thesis, p96.

Some evidence for this comment would have been helpful as in many cases the central position in Scotland owed at least as much to more mundane considerations such as avoiding graves (e.g. St Machar's, Aberdeen), not losing pew rents (e.g. North Leith, Edinburgh) and simplifying blowing arrangements.

[32] Presbytery of Glasgow, *A statement of the proceedings of the Presbytery of Glasgow, relative to the use of an organ in St Andrew's Church in the public worship of God, on the 23rd August 1807.*

[33] *Ibid.,* p91.

to achieve them in this particular case. The arguments on both sides were fairly specious - the Presbytery's case rested on the fact that:

> Instrumental Music was confined to the service of the Temple and more intimately connected with the offering of sacrifice and that we have no warrant to transfer it with the Christian Church any more than other rites of the Jewish religion - that our blessed Lord and of his Apostles upon the subject, affords no presumption that the passages in the New Testament which relate expressly to the praises of God, either allude to thanksgiving, pronounced by the Minister, without the vocal melody of the Congregation, or to singing with the human voice at the Psalms and Hymns and Spiritual Songs.[34]

Dr Ritchie's arguments were that since the use of the organ was wished by the congregation and caused no disturbance it was nobody else's business.[35] This view was shared by the Principal of Glasgow University, Dr Taylor, and his colleagues who further believed that only the General Assembly should adjudicate if it was not a purely congregational matter:

> No law of the Church, nor of the Land, has been passed concerning Instrumental Music, and they know of no law existing that is contrary.[36]

The Relief Church which did not hesitate to rock boats over such matters as hymns which they had authorised as early as 1794, also drew the line when the congregation of Roxburgh Place Church[37] introduced an organ in 1829 without consulting the Edinburgh Relief Presbytery. The Presbytery's intervention was later seen by the *Scotsman* as contravening a congregation's freedom to determine its own paths. The paper also warned that it was 'a matter of taste affecting no great principle; to make it the subject of any strong measure likely to endanger the unity of the Relief Body would be very unwise.'[38] The paper's, possibly not altogether altruistic,[39] advice (encouraging controversy is good for business) fell on deaf ears

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[34] *Ibid.*, p120.
[35] See Appendix page 254.
[36] Presbytery of Glasgow, *Op. Cit.*, p23.
[37] See page 27.
[38] *Scotsman*, 24 01 1829.
[39] However the *Scotsman* was genuinely pro-organ as its comments about Müller's playing indicates:

but both Presbyteries may be allowed some sympathy.

However benevolent and open-minded the administrators of an organisation may be, they do like to know what is going on and to be consulted in good time where a move is likely to cause controversy. At a period when both the Church of Scotland in Glasgow and the Edinburgh Relief Presbyteries were facing great tensions in matters of patronage, belief, social organisation and church accommodation associated with the population explosion in the towns, addressing the burning issues of the day was more important than the consideration of tasteful accompaniments on the organ or harmonium. It has also to be noted that the Presbyteries comprised elders as well as clergy and did not necessarily reflect the views of the clerical leadership alone. Nevertheless the hysterical tone of the campaign against Dr Ritchie and the St Andrew's, Glasgow Congregation does Dr Porteus and Glasgow Presbytery little credit:

> .... they saw the constitutional authority of the city trampled upon - the order of the church deranged - the peace of the city disturbed - contention and its ordinary compassions let loose and they could perceive no motive for all this but such as they are unwilling to describe.[40]

The Disruption, which did require congregations to consider their relationship with the "constitutional authorities" in a rather more analytical frame of mind, ensured that decisions about the presence or absence of organs in church services had to be left meantime - if for no other reason than cost at a financially fraught time for all arms of the church. Nevertheless such moves to introduce organs as were mooted in this period seemed to come from the clergy rather than the laity:

> I certainly have no prejudice myself against having an instrument to guide the vocal music. Indeed I lately wanted to have one in my own congregation; but was told, if I brought an organ into it, I should only have the organic remains of a congregation left.[41]

We wish Mr Müller would afford the public an opportunity, on some occasion, of hearing his power as a performer on the organ. The situation of an organist at St Paul's Chapel which he so ably fills, affords little scope for a display of his skilful management of that instrument.

Scotsman, 1829.

[40] Glasgow Presbytery, *Op. Cit.*, p28.

[41] Rev Dr W. L. Alexander quoted in the 'Report', *Association for the Revival of Sacred Music in Scotland*, 1851.

However after forty or so years of post-Disruption consolidation and growth the arrival of Victorian Hymns and the 50% grants of Andrew Carnegie towards the installation (and, occasionally, the updating) of church organs encouraged the Scottish Established and Free churches to revisit the organ question. Despite Church of Scotland Ministers being warned in the 1870s that if heritors spent money on instruments their pay might suffer in consequence and there being some worries that poorer churches might not be able to afford them, hundreds of organs began to be installed in Scottish churches of all denominations. By the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries the organ, particularly in the hands of musicians like Alfred Hollins of St George's Free, Edinburgh, had ceased to be a major source of illwill and was beginning to play a critical role in the renaissance and development of Scottish church music.

Unaccompanied Scottish Choral and Congregational Music

The abandoning of the organ at the Reformation was probably little regretted in a country with only a passing knowledge of an instrument which could never have had more than a very minor role in some cathedral and parish/collegiate church services. The strife and difficulties of the 17th century would have served only to further marginalise and demonise the organ. Such singing as took place at the illegal conventicles perforce would have been without instruments and, however circumscribed and unsatisfactory in reality, could only have added lustre to the belief that unaccompanied psalmody was something particularly "Scottish". As it happens, until the 19th century many in the Scottish Episcopal Church probably thought the same! Episcopal services were conducted on almost indentical musical lines to those of the Presbyterians (as indeed were many Church of England ones) and with the same precentor-led metrical psalmody. Although the first Episcopal church in Scotland to install an organ - St Paul's Chapel of Ease, Aberdeen (significantly a wealthy Church of England congregation) - did so in 1725, many Episcopal churches only started acquiring instruments of their own at the beginning of the 19th century and even then most continued to use precentors. As with the Presbyterians, Episcopal congregations were also to find that the introduction of organs into their worship was not to be a smooth process! The objections to organs may have been slightly different in the two traditions but the end result - difficulties and illwill - were the same.

Despite a period of nearly three-quarters of a century from the late 1800s when organ-led public worship in the leading Presbyterian Churches was accepted with good grace - even enthusiasm - Scottish antipathy to church organs has never been entirely dispelled. The unsympathetic acoustics for organs, which require a generous resonance to make their fullest impact, the visual disruption caused by ugly casework, and poor playing standards can all be advanced in explanation, but probably those who question the relevance to Scottish church music of the organ suspect that the instrument tends to inhibit experiment and to "de-personalise" worship.

The latter concern resonates particularly well with late 16th-century Reformed theology which regarded any form of intermediary between God and man - hierarchies, priests or musicians - with the greatest of suspicion. Rejecting the organ and making the minimal musical requirements of services the responsibility of the congregation therefore made good theological sense. Most of these attitudes were shared by English Reformers, yet music continued to flourish south of the border - possibly more widely than has been thought until recently:

> First it is clear that complex polyphonic music was not confined as was once thought to a tiny group of the largest and best-endowed churches. Even parish churches, particularly those in large urban centres such as London, Bristol, Norwich and York were significant players at this level, paying for music to be copied and hiring outside singers when necessary. Monasteries, hitherto almost ignored by musicologists, emerge as similarly important in the late 15th and early 16th centuries, given that even a foundation of relatively modest wealth 'could kepe oure lat masse daily with priksong and organs' (as at Tutbury Priory in 1499)[42]

Part of the evidence for a dynamic Reformation-period English Parish as well as Cathedral musical life rests with music inventories which reveal that 'even small churches might have access to large musical collections'.[43] Equally important are the records of payment to singers which often accompany the inventories - a much more reliable indicator of musical activity! Scottish written records would seem to

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[42] A. Wathey, 'The English Resistance', *BBC Music Magazine*, September 2001, p42. Wathey is a Professor of Music at London University.
[43] *Ibid.*

prove the exact opposite - the lack of any books of polyphony in the Scottish Chapel Royal Inventory of 1505[44] being a case in point.

Where actual choral music has survived in Scotland caution still has to be exercised. The contents of the *Carver Choir Book* might have been sung by the Choir of the Scottish Chapel Royal at some stage but, for a start, the music of such ferocious difficulty makes one curious to know if the treble parts were actually taken by choirboys where they came from and what their subsequent careers were. It was not unknown for 16th-century choirboys to be press-ganged[45] from provincial cathedrals, where presumably they had been well-taught, into the English Chapel Royal to cope with the music sung there; their Scottish counterparts, 'six boy clerics', merely had to be 'competently trained in song, or fit to be instructed therein'.[46] Wode's remark about Peebles' sight reading skills suggests that 16th-century choirboys usually learnt their parts by rote but the length of the Carver pieces would demand exceptional memorisation ability if sung without music.

Other extant polyphonic choirbooks which are considerably less demanding than the *Carver Choir Book* also require circumspection when it comes to assessing their possible use in performance. The contents of the 13th-century *St Andrews Music Book* may well have been assembled by travelling clergy as "souvenirs" during or upon their return from visits to the continent[47] while the 16th-century *Douglas Fischar* choirbook could have been a compendium of choice items for private

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44 To suggest any books of polyphonic music used in the Chapel Royal 'were the property of individuals and were therefore not included in the inventory of the institution' seems a little unlikely! I. Woods Preece, 'Music and Worship in Sixteenth-Century Scotland', I. Woods Preece, *Op. Cit.*, p95.

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> The practice of impressing choristers for the service of the Church at St Paul's, St George's Windsor, and the Chapel Royal, instituted as early as the reign of Richard II, still existed (in the reign of Henry VIII), and "sondry men with placards" or warrants, had power to take and seize all children 'with good brestes" or voices, whenever they were to be found, for the purpose of recruiting the choirs of the above-named places.

W. A. Barrett, *English Church Composers*, p13. John Bull was one of the most distinguished products of this recruitment régime.

46 C. Rogers, *History of the Chapel Royal in Scotland*, pxxxii.

47 q.v. the Notre Dame style of the music. It seems possible that the Book was brought to Scotland by Bishop Mauvoison:

> It is concluded that a member of Mauvoisin's *familia*, perhaps Mauvoisin himself, provided the driving force for the promotion of Parisian polyphony at St Andrews as a result of the discovery of that repertory during travels in France in the first quarter of the thirteenth century.

M. Everist, 'From Paris to St Andrews: The Origins of W1', [i.e. The St Andrews Music Book] *Journal of the American Musicological Society, Vol XLIII* , 1990, p41. This still does not prove any of the music contained in the book was ever sung at St Andrews! See Appendix page 255 for full text of Everist's abstract.

performance[48] or study[49] by a diplomat or courtier. A book like the mid-16th-century *Art of Music/Scots Anonymous* was possibly just a primer containing examples of "good practice".

Whether or not any of these books were actually used liturgically, there is a serious risk in employing anachronistic performing standards to reinforce an unwarranted implication that a certain piece of early music "must have been performed" because it was so "beautiful":

> So we can imagine the two part Kyrie tropes in the *St Andrews Music Book* providing the first sound of polyphony in a world which this kind of sound was new. As the music changed from the single melody and divided into two parts, it must have transformed the whole aural experience of the Mass. Properly sung it should be a moment both intense and ethereal, an exquisite blend of decoration and simplicity calling for two expert singers, the upper male voice floating high above, making use of the resonance of the cathedral for which it was intended.[50]

Even if one ignores the questionable assumptions about the acoustics and the expertise of the singers, the range of the melody in the example given in *Scotland's Music* to illustrate the point - at whatever pitch it was performed - hardly justifies the description of the top part 'floating high above', as most (male) singers would have to change from falsetto to normal in performance. Applying modern ideas of beauty and etherealness to early music, when we have no guarantee that singers in those days either had the technique or the inclination to achieve them, is dangerous. Many musical developments historically have traded on their shock and dynamic characteristics rather than their "beauty" - one thinks of the primitive church organ,[51] the violin in the early Baroque and vast areas of classical and popular music in the 20th century; it may be sensible to assume that excitement rather than pre-echoes of Choral Evensong in English Cathedral or Oxbridge Chapel

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[48] A chamber context for the performance of church music was anticipated by Byrd in his *Cantiones Sacrae* for example. Parts could either be doubled or substituted by instruments which would of course made performances much easier.

[49] A possible provenance for the *Douglas Fischar Song Book* i.e. that it belonged to a singer in Mary Queen of Scots entourage is very plausible. J. Ross, *Musik Fyne,* p80, refers.

[50] J. Purser, *Op. Cit.*, p53. See Appendix p287.

[51]

> However like a siren an organ in c1000 was, or however simple its music, whether playing alone or with singers the experience in sound it offered was startling.

P. Williams, *The King of Instruments,* p88.

was the motivation for counterpoint in the medieval chancel. Since most northern cathedrals appeared to shun polyphony at the time the *St Andrew's Music Book* was written it is anyway clearly wiser to restrict speculation to whether or not its contents were ever performed liturgically:

> It is well to remember that, although polyphonic repertories were the most innovative musical repertories created at this time, they would not have been performed in the monasteries or in the more northern European cathedrals.[52]

In many parts of Scotland - particularly away from the large cities the music practised in the local communities must have been exclusively monodic. The relevance of elaborate polyphonic music to a chapter in a great cathedral like Elgin much concerned with matters of property and jurisdiction might seem doubtful. In any event the selection of any specialist staff from the south would be likely geared to those areas rather than choir training for which facilities like keyboards may well have been non existent.

It does seem that performing written out polyphonic music was the almost exclusive preserve of the professional singer[53] in late 15th- and early 16th-century Europe. Acquiring skilled professionals might well have been possible for the Scottish Chapel Royal, possibly St Andrews Cathedral and one or two other establishments but one would be extremely surprised if Lincluden Priory with which the *Douglas Fischar Book* is sometimes associated could ever have raised the required forces. Where a choir is known to exist there are still no absolute guarantees that it could perform polyphony. A description of the (presumably "amateur") choir in Dunkeld Cathedral in Alexander Myln's *Vitae Episcoprum Dunkeldensium* (c1517) is claimed to prove the existence of a fine choir there and, by extrapolation, another in the Scottish Chapel Royal:

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[52] M. Fassler and P. Jeffery, 'The Development of Gregorian Chant in Europe'. p30. *Gregorian Chant* edited by H. Smith, p 50. [Margot Fassler is Director of Yale University's Institute of Sacred Music and Peter Jeffrey is a Gregorian Chant Scholar and Professor of Musicology at Princeton University.]

[53]

> Prior to around the last years of the fifteenth century no evidence has yet been found to suggest that among the adult members of the choir any other than the professional singers - the lay clerks of the second form - were expected to be able to perform the polyphonic repertory... In chantry colleges, in which the chaplains of the choir served also also as the managing fellows of the college, prime responsibility for singing polyphony probably continued perforce to lie with the clerks alone .

R. Bowers, 'To Chorus from Quartet', J. Morehen, *Op. Cit.*, p33.

> If Dunkeld Cathedral could assemble a choir of ability and education then it is probable that a prestigious institution such as the Chapel Royal was staffed by persons of no lesser attributes.[54]

The 'attributes' are as follows.

> Sir Stephen Young : 'chorister steady in the chant'
> Master John Pennicuke: 'has studied music'
> Sir James Lawder: 'a good musician'
> Sir William Martyne: 'has musical gifts'
> John Martyne: 'with a mastery of music'
> Sir Thomas Bettoun: 'trained in the theory of music as well as the art of singing. He is steady and correct in all manner of chanting, and a pillar of the choir.
> Sir John Martyne, John Leslie and William Scherar: 'all thorough musicians and accustomed from their youth to take their part in service and rule the choir'.

None of these 'attributes' provides unassailable evidence of the ability of any of the choir members to sing complex polyphonic music or indeed confims that any of them - with the possible exception of Bettoun - could actually read music at all. Indeed the separation of theory and practice in Bettoun's CV could be used to argue that by 'musical' Myln just meant the ability to sing unison chants in tune and with an agreeable sound or even just loudly. The tone of the passage suggests that the choir was a friendly and musically inclined group, but it would be highly incautious to allow any of the descriptions musicological significance. There is no guarantee that Myln (Abbot of Cambuskenneth Abbey) knew anything about music; if he did, his comments would surely have included some remarks about the repertoire beyond the chant that the choir sang. The omission of any reference to the presence or absence of instrumental skill is also surprising in a review of a group of supposedly high quality musicians. None of the choir are known - or suggested by Myln - to have been composers, which might also be considered unusual at a time when the production of music was a most important requirement of a professional musician.

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54 I. Woods Preece,'Music and Worship in 16th-century Scotland', I. Woods Preece, *Op. Cit.* , p84.

The, admittedly later, records of Ludlow Parish Church, Shropshire which start just after the Reformation do provide evidence to suggest a reasonably viable present and even more distinguished past for that church's music:

> As no complete set of part-books is included, their importance must not be over-emphasised; but in so far as they indicate the early repertory of the Anglican service, they are a valuable addition to the manuscripts already known.
>
> Each of the five manuscripts is from a different set of part-books and none is complete in itself. The contents of the Elizabethan manuscripts confirm the decline in church music during most of the reign that can be deduced from the archival material.[55]

Similar information would surely have been kept if the Scottish Chapel Royal Choir had enjoyed similar or better success than Ludlow's musical establishment. The fact that the Ludlow records include the payments to the singers is further evidence that the music in the partbooks was probably sung.

If pre-Reformation Scottish choral music had flourished in Scottish Cathedral, Collegiate Church or Monastery, it is difficult to believe that efforts would not have been made to preserve at least some of it. A positive attitude towards church music - not to say music in general - surely would have guaranteed the survival of a sizeable part of the repertoire. Despite the ultra-Protestant sentiments of the early Reformation in England, which were as strong if not stronger than in Scotland, much music from that period is still in existence. Indeed the immediacy and tunefulness of late Elizabethan and Jacobean masterpieces probably have roots in those many simple but high-quality mid-16th-century "note for note" style anthems like *Call to remembrance O Lord* (R Farrant ? - 1581) demanded by Cranmer and others, which have survived to the present day.

The shortage of books of notated music drives some commentators to assume that much Scottish polyphonic music was therefore improvised. The polyphonic skills mentioned in *The Palice of Honour* by Gavin Douglas (1474-1522), for example, are all improvised with the exception of pricksang [written-out polyphonic music] and are frequently cited as proof of a lively Scottish tradition - twice in Isobel Woods Preece *Music in the Scottish Church up to 1603* (pp 31 and 186) for example.

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[55] A. Smith, 'Elizabethan Church Music at Ludlow', *Music and Letters* , 1968, p115.

> In Modulation hard I play and sing
> Faburden, pricksang, discant, conturyng
> Cant organe, figuration and gemmell...
>
> Sesquialtera and decupla resortis
> Diapason of mony sortis

Allowing that Douglas knew the meanings of the terms he used - and this is not guaranteed[56] - it seems that the ability to read polyphonic music was in all probability a pre-requisite for improvisation:

> Although not all of the skills appear on every indenture, they are always listed in the same order and therefore suggest a progressive order of attainment. ... For example, choristers had to be able to read mensural music ('pricksong') before they could sing chant in a rhythmicised way ('figuration'), or could 'sight' notes on a staff that were consonant with the written chant and sing counterpoints to it ('descant', etc).[57]

The absence of books of polyphony (pricksong) in the Scottish Chapel Royal, noted above, does not automatically rule out the singing of improvised polyphony there but does makes it seem rather unlikely. It has to be said that the firing of the St Nicholas, Aberdeen Choir *en masse* in 1532[58] for its poor singing of the simple Gregorian melodies of the Choir Office at one of the most distinguished pre-Reformation churches for music is not an encouraging indicator of possible high levels of improvisatory attainment there or elsewhere in Scotland.

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[56] There is, of course, a chance that Douglas was not a musician and either selected the terms for their poetic qualities or took them from the standard statement of skills required for preferment in church music. In 1477 William Horwood was engaged to teach 'pryksong, faburden, diskant and counter' at Lincoln, for example, (quoted in F. Ll. Harrison, 'English Polyphony' *The New Oxford History of Music*, p306). The confusion Douglas apparently causes by using 'decupla resortis' may simply confirm that he really did not know the meaning of the words he was using. I. Woods Preece, 'Cant Organe A lost Technique', I. Woods Preece, *Op. Cit.*, p189, refers.

[57] J. Flynn, 'The education of choristers in England', J. Morehen, *Op. Cit.*, p182.

[58]
> *13th January 1532* item, the hale town having being conuenit as said is, all in ane voce, dischargit all thair singers in thair quier, that has feis of thame and their commond guid fray the purificacioun of our lady, callit Candlimess comus, and all proffetis tha hane of thame, for their demeritis bigane done to God and tham, during the tounis will, except Sir Ando Coupar, that is am agit man .

C. Innes, *Op. Cit.*, p143.

Modern scholarship seems determined to base its pre-Reformation Scottish Church Music theories on a very limited amount of far from conclusive written and musical evidence. Applying practical criteria - e.g. what skills could choirboys without an instrumental background in an era of poor communications be expected to acquire - might be helpful in separating from the material that has survived what was likely to have been performed and what was purely for study. Those with considerable experience in choral work with both the average school pupil and the talented university student with an instrumental background will be only too aware of the worlds of difference in achievement, speed of learning and attention span. The greatest of patience is required to teach the former even the simplest forms of part music like canons for example. Furthermore, issues like tuning systems and pedagogic methods also need to be investigated and resolved before any improvised part singing on the part of 16th-century provincial choirboys can be confidently proposed:

> The fully underlaid 'fair' copies [from the *Inverness Fragments*] though uniformly copied, cannot be made to fit together as a three-voice setting, whatever clefs are chosen for the upper voices; and in any case a three-voice faburden setting is unlikely to have been written out fully in this way. Accordingly, it is suggested that they were intended as a means of practising faburden procedure. It is unlikely that more than two people could be expected to read simultaneously from these particular copies - at most, perhaps, two boys supervised by the master. The provision of the underlaid text suggests that there were occasions when pupils were required to concentrate on the musical principles, and the text (a vesper sung daily without the special alleluias) with which they were presumably well acquainted, was given in order to make the musical concentration easier, one element fewer to remember. These three copies perhaps provided an elementary practical introduction to faburden techniques.[59]

It is difficult to believe that Medieval boys with less than two years' schooling could follow such tortuous teaching methods, but realism has never been a strong point in texts on how to improvise, then or now! The progress expected in three recent

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[59] S. Allenson, 'The Inverness Fragments' *Music and Letters*, February 1989, p13.

organ improvisation primers by Arthur Wills, Nigel Alcoat and Gerre Hancock[60] might be thought to be as meteoric as that demanded by the *Inverness Fragments*:

> The work in this chapter [the first!] aims at the development of contrapuntal improvisation in two to four parts, using firstly plainchant and chorale melodies, and then more freely constructed movements based in the eighteenth-century English voluntary and French *Livre d'orgue* idioms.[61]

Possibly some support for part singing on the lines of the *Inverness Fragments* might be thought to lie in the later Gaelic *Long Psalm.* In the *Long Psalms*, standard European metrical psalm tunes are treated to melismatic and heterophonic decoration which may well have come from an earlier Scottish tradition. However even for those that appreciate the "powerful beauty" of Hebridean psalm singing, the disregard for traditional "rules of engagement" in part movement and discord must surely lead them to disqualify it - or its possible antecedents - from the category of "improvised polyphony". But again, much more significant than pursuing "connections" with later practice would be a successful demonstration of the very tricky fabourdon techniques[62] in the *Inverness Fragments* by a small group of children.

If the *Inverness Fragments* or *Scots Anonymous* improvised fabourdons were ever performed it is surely likely that the boys were taught their parts by ear - as Wood's comments about Peebles suggest was the usual practice. Even then a degree of general aural acuity has to be presupposed which would surprise many present-day musicians with experience of the young. The ability to pitch intervals accurately and to sing in tune is relatively rare among school pupils - even those in secondary certificate music classes - despite their being surrounded in their daily lives by perfectly in-tune performances of often wall-to-wall music. The present writer's Scottish Education Department O Grade music examination returns for 1979 reveal that out of 55 candidates only 11 managed to sing the required unaccompanied major and minor scales and tonic and dominant arpeggios (reasonably) accurately. The present writer can also only recall one absolutely perfectly in-tune performance

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[60] A. Wills,*Yehudi Menuhin Guides Orga*n.
N. Alcoat, *An Introduction to Improvisation.*
G. Hancock,*Improvising: How to Master the Art.*
[61] A.Wills, *Op. Cit.*, p188.
[62] It is the present writers experience that school children find descanting above a tune much easier than singing in parallel above and, especially, below.

of an unaccompanied Scots Song over many years of adjudicating in Dundee Primaries - and the source of it is now a distinguished professional tenor.[63]

The "parallelism approach" to historical evidence which the present study recommends, would suggest very little (and that taught by rote), non-unison singing in the great majority of Scottish cathedrals, abbeys and major churches. Carefully researched comparisons have in fact already been drawn and tested which seem particularly relevant to any assessment of musical achievement in 16th-century Scottish *Pricksang*. Experiments have provided convincing evidence that the talented 20th-century chorister and his 16th-century counterpart found the same things difficult to read and sing accurately, and hence that it was necessary to provide 'performance editions' for both (my underlining):

> On the other hand, a performance edition could follow the surviving contemporary performance edition, [of Fayrfax, Mass *O quam glorifica*] but in this case it loses all suggestion of 9/8. The seminars arranged by Peter le Huray in Cambridge in 1990/1 provided the opportunity to try out with his choir some editorial principles and practical strategies for this mass, and it was found that, in order to maintain 9/8 for long as possible and yet permit performance of the passages in triplets, the music still needs to be arranged, but arranged in a manner different from that of the early sixteenth century.[64]

If, despite the absence of performance editions and other conclusive evidence, the complex masses and motets of Carver and others were performed in the Scottish Chapel Royal and elsewhere, musicians used to training young singers will strongly suspect that, firstly, the 'adult' singers were professionals with outstanding reading skills and, secondly, the treble parts were taken by very experienced late teenagers or adults singing *falsetto*. In one of the best (admittedly Jacobean) English Chapel Choirs - Peterhouse Cambridge - during John Cosin's time as Master:

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[63] Mark Wilde.
[64] R. Bray, 'Editing and performing *musica speculativa* ', J. Morehen, *Op. Cit.*, p54 .

> ... there is no evidence that the choir normally included choristers (boy trebles). The normal high part (the "mean") of much music used in the college at the time can successfully be sung by male altos.[65]

A final admonition to be wary about Scottish choral achievements may lie in the similarity between the 1505 and 1529 Liturgical Directions for King's College Chapel, Aberdeen. These suggest a chronic low level of musical achievement in what was intended as a model establishment; not only is there no evidence of development in the music during the intervening quarter-century, but there is a hint that polyphonic music was never sung there (my underlining):

> Liturgical Directions from the Foundation Charter of Bishop Elphinstone 1505
>
> We will and ordain that there shall be in the said college eight prebendaries constituted in the priesthood skilled and instructed in Gregorian chant, *rebus factis*, namely pricksang, figured music, faburden with mensuris and descant if they are able conveniently to be had, otherwise well instructed in Gregorian chant, *rebus factis*, faburden at least who in like manner also ought to study in one of the foresaid faculties. In which there shall be four able youths or poor boys, at any rate instructed in Gregorian chant at the least.
>
> Liturgical Directions from the Second Foundation Charter by Bishop Gavin Dunbar 1529
>
> There shall be eight prebendaries, priests, skilled in Gregorian chant, rebus factis, namely pricksang, figuration, faburden and other kinds of descant, if they can conveniently be had, but otherwise at least instructed in Gregorian chant, rebus factis, and figuration[66] among whom we wish the first to be called chanter and the second sacrist. Lastly for the completion there shall be six poor boys suitable for singing and instructed in chant who with the said eight prebendary priests ought to be present at divine service each day and at the hours, and are bound to study in one of the said faculties and give diligent work to it.[67]

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[65] T. Cooper, 'Choral Evensong in the time of William Laud', *Ecclesiology Today*, May 2002, p8. Cooper also points out that boys voices changed much later in the 17th century. The present writer recalls a 21 year old Head Chorister in the St Andrew's Cathedral Choir, Aberdeen in the 1950s.

[66] Here figuration can surely be taken as fabourdon.

[67] F. C. Eeles, *Op. Cit.*, pp 87 and 89.

Improvements in the music surely would have rendered the phrase 'if they can conveniently be had' which appears in both documents completely unnecessary in the later one. The disappearance of the word 'able' might also indicate an acceptance that musically talented youths had been difficult to come by. The importance placed on 'poor' in both Liturgical Directions could suggest that musical ability was not the main criterion for appointment to the choir - though "poor" may just mean "non-aristocratic" of course.

While it is impossible to state categorically that pre-Reformation Scottish Church music was unambitious and probably poorly executed, a picture of choirs singing complex polyphony surely cannot be sustained on the limited and usually ambiguous evidence available.[68] The elegant state of preservation of the Carver Choir Book, for example, suggests infrequent performance at best. It goes without saying that neither bits of music turning up in a book binding, like the *Inverness Fragments*, are proof they were ever sung, nor that impressive statutes for musical establishments, such as those for King's College, Aberdeen, actually resulted in expert choirs. The subsequent record of poor Scottish church and secular music could be used to suggest strongly that that the musical achievement of pre-Reformation Scotland was probably very far from 'notable'.

Not only pre-Reformation improvised polyphony but the "humble" metrical Psalm so central to post-Reformation Scottish Church Music needs to be shorn of the romantic myths so often applied to it and to be considered dispassionately. Reports, for example, of an estimated two thousand people singing a favourite psalm (Ps. 124) in four-part harmony to welcome a much loved minister, John Durie, back to Edinburgh in 1582 surely require to be treated with some wariness. Modern commentators have no problems in accepting the veracity of the report - 'the proof is found in a diarist's account'.[69] While Millar Patrick did have some reservations,

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[68] Without definite evidence one way or the other, Patrick Hamilton's putative "9-part Mass" may just as likely be unison settings of the ordinary and propers of the mass as polyphonic renderings of the ordinary for example.

[69] J. Bell, *Op. Cit.*, p16. G. J. Munro also seems comfortable with the assertion:

> The harmony parts may even have been attempted by congregations, since, upon the famous return of John Durie in 1582, a 2,000 strong crowd is reported to have sung Psalm 124 in harmony.

G. J. Munro, 'Scottish Reformation and its Consequences'. I. Woods Preece, *Op.Cit.*, p297.

he did venture the 'the further possibility that there were a number of singers trained in the old Song School of St Giles or Trinity College who had skill enough to sing from memory, or to 'put in' an extemporised bass or alto or treble'.[70] Allowing that some people did know one of at least three extant settings of Psalm 124 by David Peebles, Andro Kemp or Anon[71] their effect in combination had there been part singing would have more than likely anticipated the following:

> ... the abuse observed in all churches, where sundrie Tribles, Bases and Counters set by diverse Authors, being sung upon one, and the same tenor, do discordingly rub each upon another, offending both Musicall, and rude ears.[72]

The possibility of informal counterpoint - with little modification the tune works as a canon at the fifth for example - or singing in parallel intervals fabourdon-style, as Millar Patrick suggests, cannot be completely discounted but one doubts whether the harmonic system was sufficiently developed for non-specialists to sense "underlying harmonies" and extemporise parts. All this assumes, of course, that everyone started in the same key and had grouped themselves into sopranos, altos, tenors and basses! Quite simply it strains credulity to believe that a huge crowd could sing in the narrow squares and streets of 16th-century Edinburgh with much more than the unison fervour of football supporters. Perhaps such "harmony" as there was came from the inevitable acoustic delay from the front to the back of the crowd!

The reality of unaccompanied singing in the post-Reformation Church of Scotland must have been very different from such apocryphal feats as the welcome to Rev Durie. Eight years before his triumphant return, the churches in Edinburgh, for example, had found it necessary to instruct their precentors to 'sing the salmis on the preching daysis in sic touns as at maist colmoun [i.e. only the best known tunes] for the kirk.[73]

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[70] M. Patrick, *Op. Cit.*, p62.
[71] All three settings can be found in *Musica Britannica XV*.
[72] E. Millar, 'Preface' to the 1635 Scottish Psalter. quoted in M. Patrick, *Op. Cit.*, p 63. As is later noted in connection with a Paisley Abbey Psalm Book (see p107), there is every reason for an author to exaggerate the shortcomings of a situation which his book is intended to remedy.
[73] *Book of the General Kirk of Edinburgh*, quoted in G. J. Munro, 'The Scottish Reformation and its Consequences'. I. Woods Preece *Op. Cit.*, p297.

An instruction like this seems tacitly to accept that many psalm tunes were too intricate for congregations, who, one suspects, could only have learnt the complex and difficult-to-memorise melodies of the 1564 Psalter from the lead of a precentor with the greatest of difficulty. It is at least as likely, however, that congregations were only prepared to sing tunes that they found attractive enough to remember easily.[74] In this connection it is a possibility, of course, that the leading Scottish Reformers actively discouraged the use of folk tunes[75] - a presumably obvious source of accessible tunes - because of concerns over the ribald words with which they were often associated. Indelicacy is a universal trait in popular music, however, and does not appear to have deterred other Reformed traditions such as the Lutheran. If music had been important to the members of the new Scottish church, and had there been a corpus of suitable indigenous folk melodies, the devil would not have been allowed to have kept the best local tunes as he was most definitely prevented from doing elsewhere - whatever the more extreme and doctrinaire leading Reformers might have wished.

In 1929 R. R. Terry was surprised that only one of the tunes (Psalm 36) in *Calvin's First Psalter* (1539) had survived in contemporary hymnals:

> When one takes into account the virility, dignity, individuality and distinction of the melodies, it is difficult to understand why none of them have found their way into modern hymnnals save the one set to Psalm xxxvi.[76]

Most of the *Psalter* tunes are very long, do not have regular metrical structures, do not use repetition or sequence and, certainly to a modern listener and quite probably to a 16th-century one as well, merely seem to meander up and down the "white notes" in a quite arbitrary fashion. It goes without saying that 'virility, dignity, individuality and distinction' are very much subjective assessments and are irrelevant in any case if people cannot remember the melodies or find them alien to

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[74] Talented 19th-century precentors also had difficulties (or disinclinations) over learning new psalm tunes it would appear. Duncan Fraser recalled a late 19th-century precentor, 'Andra M,' with a magnificent voice ('seldom have I heard a finer natural voice anywhere') who, despite the earnest efforts of the minister's wife to teach him tunes 'could not trust his ear in psalmody, although in song singing he was the best in the Parish'.
D. Fraser, *The Passing of the Precentor*, p117.

[75] Millar Patrick notes that in early Psalters the 'folk-song element [was] not allowed to intrude' There is no guarantee, of course, that there was a suitable Scottish 'folk-element' to be ostracized. M. Patrick, *Op. Cit.*, p51. John Calvin, in particular, wished a specifically church music style - see page 220.

[76] R. R. Terry, *Calvin's First Psalter* (1539), pi. See Appendic, p287.

their normal musical experience. The tune for *Psalm 36,* on the other hand, is sufficiently tightly structured that one could imagine most congregational members, whatever their musical preferences, "picking it up" relatively easily - hence its lasting success.

The deterioration of the attractive and memorable tune *Les Commandments de Dieu* from the version composed by Louis Bourgeois to *Commandments* illustrates how easily even "good" tunes are forgotten or changed when instruments are not used to ensure accurate transmission of a melody and to provide leadership in performance. It should come as no surprise that the Scottish Psalm tune repertoire quickly shrank to a small group of "common tunes". The fact that so few copies of the Wood and 1635 Miller Psalters have survived (perhaps those that have are the only ones that were produced) suggests that very few harmonised tunes (there are only a dozen in Miller's 1634 printed Psalter) were ever used in the churches. The psalm tunes in reports and the Latin motets were surely never intended for anything other than home consumption.

What little is known of the post-Reformation Sang Schule, sadly does not encourage any belief that the music in the great Parish Churches which they serviced was ever particularly good and certainly cannot be used to suggest that complex psalm tunes were sung accurately and in parts there.[77]

While in at least some of the Sang Schules instrumental music was taught -

> It is interesting to note that Kirk Sessions no less than Town Councils demanded the masters of the Sang Schules to be instrumentalists as well as vocalists, and the records show that the Sang Schules were intended to give a training in the art of music both theoretical and practical and not merely to train children in the simple psalmody required for the daily services of the Kirk.[78]

- caution has to be exercised in assuming how much success was actually achieved in the majority of places. Not only was there the famous Act of 1579 *For the*

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> ... and it would seem that Richard Boyle was unable to play the organ [i.e. keyboard of any description] for in that year he was relegated to the second place in the Sang Schule.

H. Wilsher, *Op. Cit.,* p41.

78 C. S. Terry, 'The Music School of Old Machar', *Spalding Miscellany , Volume 2* , p228.

Instruction of the Youth in Music [79] to suggest that music was in serious decay shortly after the Reformation, but since no government guidance or funds were ever offered to the burghs to help implement the act, it is probably sensible to assume that those Sang Schules that resulted from this legislation were merely elementary schools where the Master might "go over" the psalms as and when required and possibly give some instrumental tuition. Instrumental work was in all likelihood rather perfunctory - not least because there was little point in encouraging non-marketable skills when they suggested inappropriate priorities:

> ... it was the grait mercie of my God that kepit me from any grait progress in singing and playing on instruments ... whereby Sathan sought even then to deboiche me.[80]

St Machar's, Aberdeen was probably typical of the more successful post-Reformation Sang Schules, but there is little in the following to suggest that even it enjoyed unalloyed success (my underlinings):

> Like others of its class, St Machar's Music School was a post-Reformation elementary parochial school, in which, over and above the normal curriculum (reading, writing, arithmetic), instrumental and vocal music was taught. ... The work of the master was examined by representatives from burgh council, Kirk Session and college from time to time, and the visitor's reports on the attainments of the pupils were not always pleasant hearing for the master.[81]

Other assessments are equally dismissive (my underlining):

> There is an interesting reference in Cumming's [David Cumming, Preceptor of Restalrig] letter to the attempt by James [VI] and his advisers to make music part of the general curriculum available to any person with the ability to profit by it. Like so many plans for education, then and now, this one remained a dead letter.[82]

As ever the proof of the pudding is in the eating and the fact that no quality musicians appear to have emerged from the Sang Schules must be seen as a serious blow to their credibility as "specialist music schools".

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[79] James VI was 13 when this law was enacted. It is unlikely he would have had either the experience or authority to ensure that its provisions were observed.
[80] *The Autobiography and Diary of Mr James Melvill,* p29, quoted in I. Macdougall, *Op. Cit.,* p16.
[81] C. S. Terry, *Op. Cit.,* p229.
[82] J. McQuaid, 'Music and the Adminstration after 1560', *Innes Review 3* , p17.

A circumscribed and badly-performed repertoire of a very few metrical psalm tunes sung in unison was clearly not a matter of great concern to either congregations or the courts of the church then, or, indeed, for centuries after. In fact until the 19th century very little effort was directed to improving the situation and such initiatives as were made were usually small scale. In 1746 the General Assembly discouraged the practice of 'lining out' more than the first line of a psalm in family devotions possibly more in deference to good neighbourliness than for aesthetic reasons:

> 'Tis recommended to private families, that in their religious exercise, in singing the praises of God, they go on without the intermission of reading each line.[83]

This Act presumably to ensure that a psalms did not drag on interminably recalls an earlier English injunction to encourage 'due harmony' in psalm singing:

> Let us... so read the psalm , that as much as in us lies we may preserve harmony and decency that the break betwixt the falling from one line to the taking up of the next, may be so quick as that due harmony may be kept in some measure [Paynes Guide 1685].[84]

It seems more than likely that 'due harmony' was used as a synonym for "harmonious" *i.e.* "well integrated"; a "harmonious" performance would be one where everyone sang the same tune in the same key and rhythm; harmonised singing in chords was surely not envisaged. If undisciplined unison singing was typical of English parish churches it seems more than likely that this would be equally true of Scottish ones. Certainly before the 19th century there were few harmonised psalters extant in Scotland, and one of the best known of these, Chalmers' *Twenty Church Tunes*, cannot be used as evidence for organised part-singing in church. Chalmers' two-part harmony psalms, unlike earlier harmonised psalters, seemed intended for unison singing with organ accompaniment - hence home or Episcopal church performance (the likely editor of *Twenty Church Tunes* was Alexander Tait of St Paul's Episcopal Chapel in Aberdeen which did have an organ) Music presented in two parts, like Clark's arrangements of the tunes Robert Burns selected for Thomson's *Scots Musical Museum* usually implies a continuo realisation and there are examples of two-part psalters definitely intended for organ use from England which can be cited in support of this interpretation.[85]

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83 'Act VIII' *Acts of the Assembly* , 1746.
84 N. Temperley, *The Music of the English Parish Church*, p89.
85 Playford 1677, Miller and Drummond, 1790 quoted in N. Temperley, *Op. Cit.*, p185 and p 215.

Indifference to improvements in Psalmody - hopefully not racial prejudice - could change to outright opposition as the English soldier/musician Thomas Channon found out when he demonstrated his improved style of Psalmody singing in Aberdeen. Channon was a gifted choir trainer supported by Sir Alexander Grant, 2nd Baronet of Monymusk, who financed a choral movement in the Presbytery of Garioch. Quite probably it was not just the brisk tempos which caused 'dramatic scenes in several Aberdeen churches when congregations singing in the old and slow way tried to drown out the more vigorous tempi being set by Channon's supporters'[86] but the breezy new tunes he introduced, some of which he had written himself.[87] Both matters were still contentious a century later, as a correspondent to the *Perth Advertiser* noted. As well as regretting that it was now possible for 'whole psalms to be sung at the time once occupied by verses', "Harmonist" was moved to say:

> I really think it is time that congregations were speaking aloud in this matter. Are we for ever to sit and listen to music in which they cannot join; if not let them be up and doing; let them at once give a decided opinion in the sort of tunes they wish to sing in church.[88]

"Harmonist's" objection to the advances made by church choirs in the Scottish Churches in the later part of the 19th century was not only the fast tempos but the "Polly-put-the-kettle-on" [his description] type of hymn tune they embraced.

Despite, or because of, Channon's notoriety, harmonised singing by congregations may well have made some progress and certainly seems to have been well established in a few places such as Paisley Abbey and St George's Church, Edinburgh by the early part of the 19th century. How well is difficult to evaluate. In R A Smith's *The Edinburgh Sacred Harmony* (c1831) the Minister of St George's, Andrew Thomson, writes:

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86 I. Bradley, *Abide with Me*, p29.

87 Miller Patrick is critical of Channon's efforts but their Methodist style is very similar to that of R. A. Smith in his anthem, *How beautiful open the mountains* :

> But Kintore is here given as proof that great as Channon's ability as conductor and propagandist must have been he had no skill as a composer.

M. Patrick, *Op. Cit.*, p183.

88 *Perthshire Advertiser*, 17 05 1870.

> Let the music be appropriate, let the band be well balanced and well trained; let the congregation join in parts, and in a subdued tone of voice; and there will be a chorus, which, in point of richness, pathos and sublimity no power or combination of instruments can ever surpass. We wish this experiment was tried by skilful men and in favourable circumstances; for in many cases, we are sure that it would succeed to a large extent, and in all cases it would be productive of improvement which will be either reached or attempted.

The word "experiment" almost suggests a hypothetical situation rather than one which actually existed. Thomson's "clarification" suggests that this indeed was the case:

> When we speak of a congregation joining in parts, we deem it important to remark that females and boys should always sing the treble; and the men the bass, counter and tenor as their voice may best suit.
>
> If the former take the tenor as they sometimes do; and if the latter take the treble, as they generally do, in our churches, the effect is greatly impaired, independently of that violation of the rules and principles of harmony which it involves.[89]

Presumably Thomson, as any musician would, did not like the men singing the tune below the bass parts of the choir. The allusion to women singing the tune - presumably this is what he means by the tenor - is surprising as in *The Edinburgh Sacred Harmony* (the most widely used harmonised Psalter at that time), all the arrangements have the tune in the treble. Thomson's request for soft congregational singing when "heartiness" is usually thought to have been the 19th-century ideal is discussed in the next chapter.

Following the enthusiasm for choral music which erupted in Edinburgh and Glasgow in the 1840s with Joseph Mainzer's choral classes, it would not be surprising if well-trained choirs and good congregational singing could be found in at least some city churches by the mid -19th century. Speaking of the *Scottish Psalmody; Being a Selection of Tunes with the prevailing harmonies used*

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[89] A. Thomson, *The Edinburgh Sacred Harmony for the use of Churches and Families.* px.

throughout Scotland, with elementary Lessons for Beginners and a Table of appropriate Tunes for All the Psalms [1858 onwards] James Love noted that:

> This work was used in the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland for a considerable time, and it is questionable if the singing in our churches was ever heartier than during the time it was employed.

From this one would have been forgiven for believing that the aims set out in the Preface had been completely achieved:

> There are two characteristics of the present publication which will, it is trusted, render it a means of promoting this desirable end of unity in singing in the Free Church. In the first place, it discards all theatrical and jig-like, and almost all repeating tunes, which, if admissable in secular meetings, are justly deemed out of place in the house of God; and it limits itself very much to that more solid and simple class, of which the established tunes of Scotland are the type and specimen. And in the second place, its harmonies are constructed on a plain and simple principle, not requiring the foreign aid of instruments or a trained band, but adapted to the easy use of the mass of the people themselves.[90]

Nevertheless Love's *caveat* suggests that these ambitions had not been universally attained:

> At all events, one had the assurance on entering a strange church that no discord or confusion would take place through the use of different tune books.[91]

Most congregations may have been "singing from the same hymn sheet", but in many churches from the early days of the Reformation up to the end of the 19th century some of the more able musically among the congregations seem to have sung in harmony during services on their own cognisance.[92] In the free-for-all - 'uproar'[93] to which Scottish psalm singing seems to have degenerated in some

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[90] J. Love, *Scottish Church Music,* p321.
[91] M. Patrick, *Op. Cit.* p322.
[92] In his *Diary* of 1574, James Melville claimed 'he learnt monie of the treables of the Psalmes whereof sum I could weill sing in the Kirk' quoted in *Ibid.*, p 61.
[93] *Ibid.*, p143.

"musical churches" before the introduction of organs no-one is likely to have worried - or possibly noticed - if a gentleman made his own harmonic arrangements. Writing about a service towards the end of the 19th century, Duncan Fraser recalls 'smuggling ... an obbligato tenor to the high treble of the "desk" with a friend assisting 'with a sort of "Methody" bass'[94] and one imagines such a musical contribution had years of tradition behind it.

Perhaps from Love and Fraser we get too rosy a picture of unaccompanied Scottish psalmody - a latter-day reincarnation of the feats of the Edinburgh crowd in welcoming Mr Durie. Hearty it may have been on occasion, but by the end of the century it had clearly lost much of its zest and vitality if Alfred Hollins' description of a service he attended at St George's Free Church, Edinburgh is to be believed:

> On our first Sunday in Edinburgh I felt out of place as one of the congregation of the church of which I was organist but where as yet there was no organ. I had not heard a service without organ since the old Fisherwick days, and there was a deadness in the singing, as though the congregation needed the support an organ would give. Professor Bruce, one of Black's former professors at Glasgow University, preached that day. I had been told that he was interested in congregational singing and he gave proof of it. One of the hymns was "O happy band of pilgrims." Bruce said, "This tune is apt to drag, so I want you to sing it fairly fast and let it go without pauses."[95]

St George's Free was famous for the excellence of its singing and for the distinction of its precentors so it should not have been necessary for a visiting preacher to favour the congregation with tips on "effective performance".

Earlier in the century Thomson had realised that not only is it difficult for inexperienced singers to remember tunes accurately, but that a sense of tonality and general confidence has to be generated through instrumental support:

> In training the choir, we should always make use of the organ or other instruments ... in order to give the singers the habit of sustaining their voices at the proper pitch - there being as everyone knows a natural tendency to fall - and to ensure steadiness and precision in the execution of whatever they have to perform.[96]

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[94] D. Fraser, *Op.Cit.*. p116.
[95] A. Hollins, *A blind musician looks back,* p226.
[96] A. Thomson, *Op. Cit.* px.

What was true for anthems and anthem-like hymns such as *Ye gates lift up your heads* was equally valid of course for simpler congregational material. Early in the 19th century Thomson had, consciously or otherwise, suspected that a larger repertoire of tunes in churches would mean organ accompaniment and quite probably unison singing. Certainly a preference for unaccompanied part-singing did not mean Thomson was 'prepared to maintain or even insinuate' that he was against instrumental music in divine worship.[97] Even Dyce seems to have had to accept that the organ would be used to accompany simple Gregorian psalm chants.[98] In a letter, Burns, the Publisher of the *Order of Daily Service* tells Dyce:

> My idea is, if you can render your aid in providing a good arrangement of these chants, to print them in a form similar to this of [Vincent] Novello, for use in our church. If Novello's harmony is good this might be adopted with his permission and then such a division of notes and bars made as will suit our Psalms.
>
> [Frederick} Oakley {Rector of the Margaret Chapel] will get some other person to arrange and publish them, and it is probable that they will not be so well done as if you had a hand in it.[99]

At the other end of the 19th century realism was increasingly accepted; a year after the *Selected Anthems* was published another leading musical clergyman, Henry Wotherspoon, could state 'the grandeur of broad congregational singing is moving and impressing to an immeasurable degree beyond anything that is producible by the part-song method'. He had also this to say about 'broad congregational singing' - 'It need not be bare unison - there is the organ to enrich the effect with its sonorous harmonies.'[100]

Thomson's analytical abilities in music convinces one that tunes like *Ye Gates lift up your heads on high* are entirely his own and were not "improved" or "arranged" by R. A. Smith whose most popular anthem, *How beautiful upon the mountains,* is in a not dissimilar style. Thomson's son John was to be a distinguished composer and if this is not an infallible indicator of paternal musical ability it does perhaps suggest some aptitude in the family pedigree.

97 *Ibid.*, pix.

98 Which is still done in such places that regularly use plainsong, e.g. Pluscarden Priory.

99 *Dyce Papers*, p636.

100 H. Wotherspoon, *Op. Cit., Transactions of the Aberdeen Eccleiological Society*, p40.

Once the organ had been established in the early years of the 20th century, for decades after congregations seemed happy with the *status quo* and providing the minister had selected the "correct tune", accompanying hymns could be an exhilarating affair for a competent organist.[101] In the last ten or so years however Church of Scotland thinking as represented by its most recent hymn/song books *Songs of God's People* and *Common Ground* has signalled a wish to return to unaccompanied songs and hymns. Nearly a quarter of the hymns in *SGP* for example are either marked 'This song is best sung unaccompanied' or are clearly intended for unaccompanied performance.

Present day apologists for "unaccompanied psalmody" might well reflect on the work of Scotland's most celebrated practioner in the field, Sir Hugh Roberton. In the Glasgow Orpheus Choir concerts and recordings of the first half of the 20th century, Roberton frequently included psalm tunes but his treatments of them could be generally categorised as "unfortunate". His arrangements and performances revealed not so much a reverence for Scottish religious culture[102] and tradition but as opportunities to "do things" with the music - exaggerated dynamics, coy phrasing and "sustained tone" amongst others. Here were Scottish secular influences holding back church music with a vengeance! Apart from depriving the psalm tunes of their virility, Roberton appears never to have performed items from the St Andrews and Millar Psalters (the latter was available in Terry's critical edition mentioned above)[103] preferring his own glee-type efforts. These, as the setting of *Kedron*[104] demonstrates, were not always particularly effective or even error-free - two sets of avoidable consecutive fifths within 28 bars seem excessive for example. Roberton's reluctance to explore music outwith a narrow stylistic range may well have been due to his inability to respond to different performance imperatives -

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[101] The singing at North Leith in the early 1960s was so vigorous it was advisable to moderate the organ's volume so that the congregation did not exhaust itself by the end of the first hymn.
[102] Roberton had strong socialist leanings in fact.
[103] Roberton avoided 16th-century polyphony in general, which was a matter of some disquiet to the distinguished musicologist Percy Scholes:

> I have no duplicate copy of that [London] programme by me but I believe that I am right in saying that it contained *one lonely example* of the music of the greatest age of composition for unaccompanied voices. I do not remember (though it may be in error about this) seeing in the programme the names of Palestrina or Victoria or any of the Italian, Spanish and Flemish masters of that period, but certainly towards the end one bold British composer did unexpectedly poke up his head, as much as to say, "I defy Mr Roberton to keep us all out!"

P. Scholes, 'The Orpheus Choir - a Retort to Mr Roberton', *Glasgow Evening News.*
[104] See Appendix page 288.

polyphony, especially liturgical polyphony, does not give much scope for "expressive singing", certainly as he saw it - for example. His inexperience in dealing with the piano, let alone the organ or orchestra, also prevented Roberton developing a more catholic repertoire for his choir. Despite one's great admiration for Roberton's creation and leadership of a very fine ensemble, his basically amateur approach to musical composition[105] and repertoire led to conservative and unimaginative programmes (however brilliantly sung) which did little for Scottish musical progress. Maurice Lindsay's asperity in 1953, two year's after Roberton's death, may be regretted but his analysis is difficult to fault:

> Unfortunately the influence of the late Sir Hugh Roberton dominates the choral scene. As a composer, Roberton was a purveyor of highly-sugared trifles; of "bonnie wee tusheries" which employed a narrower harmonic range than the hymns of Messrs. Moody and Sankey. .... The Roberton sentimental mannerisms also affect far too much choral singing - the oppressive swooning falls; those punched consonants and licked labials those lingering tonal lurches, and such sentimental affectations. It is more than high time that the Roberton-Orpheus 'tradition' was banished and put out of mind.[106]

Thorpe Davie was equally scathing at The Scottish Schools Music Association Spring Meeting in Dundee in 1947. Predictably his comments were not kindly received - one irate correspondent to the *Evening Citizen* dismissed them with the presumably unanswerable declaration that "Dr Moonie said the Glasgow Orpheus Choir was practically unmatched by any choir in the world for virtuosity".[107] The only conference member recorded as sharing Thorpe Davies' alarm at the Orpheus hegemony in Scottish Choral Music was a 17-year-old school pupil, Patricia Morrison, who pointed out that the choir members 'confined themselves to part songs, rarely tackling really big works'.[108] Perhaps as a young person freeing herself from the "received wisdom" of the adult world, she realised the dampening effect on Scottish music of Roberton's moribund repertoire.

The fact remains that Roberton's view of how the "old"[109] Scots Psalm Tunes should be treated is the one that has prevailed in Scotland even since his death.

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105 Roberton's large scale setting of *The Beatitudes* sadly deserves the criticisms showered on it by Thorpe Davie and others. See Appendix page 255.
106 M. Lindsay, 'Scottish Causerie ', *Life and Work,* July 1953, p149.
107 *Evening Citizen,* April 1947.
108 *Ibid.*
109 Only 13 out of the 33 Psalm arrangements in Roberton's *Faux Bourdon Series* are pre-1700.

Indeed it is debatable whether or not the authentic early Reformation psalm tunes in *CH3* (Ps 3, Ps 12, Ps 107 and Ps 136) would be recognised as "Scottish Psalmody" at all by generations brought up on Roberton. Any return to more general use of unaccompanied music in the Scottish Churches certainly needs to be considered very carefully - a matter which is discussed in Chapter 9.

Apportioning blame for the delay in employing the organ to revitalise Scottish Church music is not an "open-and-shut" case though the conservatism of the laity from Dyce to Harmonist does seem much more crucial than any clerical anti-organ lobby - indeed without support even an activist like the Rev James Begg[110] could not have held out so long. What appears undeniable is that from the Reformation until Roberton the promotion of unaccompanied church music as a "musical ideal" in Scotland has hampered the creation of an extensive national repertoire of both congregational and liturgical choral music. Much as J S Bach and other German composers could be criticised for changing the character of the chorale from simple folksong-like congregational melodies to works of finished and sophisticated art - as in organ preludes and cantatas like *Wachet Auf* for example - there is no gainsaying the virility of the Lutheran Church Music tradition to which they contributed and to which, at least in part, Germany owes its status as probably the most musical nation on earth.

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[110] The delay in the merger of the Free and United Presbyterian churches has been attributed to tensions over the'organ case' created by Begg and his followers.

Chapter 3

Scottish University Chapels - Centres of Excellence?

Summary

The tradition of excellence in English Choral Music is a recent phenomenon and can be traced back only to the end of the 19th century. The present high standards in English Choral Establishments are mainly due to leading Oxbridge Colleges, especially King's and St John's, Cambridge, and some cathedrals and parish churches such as Peterborough and Hampstead, whose choirs became well known through broadcasting and records as recently as the 1950s and 1960s. In this chapter the reasons for the Scottish University Chapels' disinclination to excel in music after the introduction of organs are examined. It is suggested that above all the reluctance to be seen as being in any way different from parish churches has stifled initiative and innovation.

Before the ills of Scottish Church Music are blamed entirely on the abandoning of the organ and the somewhat grudging acknowledgement of the role music can play in the life of the church, it has to be accepted that the success of English Church Music is traceable to the survival of "centres of excellence"[1] - the cathedrals and Oxford and Cambridge colleges especially - as well as the retention of the organ during the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods. Cathedrals and colleges kept their status and clerical establishments at the English Reformation and were allowed to continue singing the daily offices and even to use Latin if they wished. In their turn they had an ultimate "centre of excellence" to guide them - The English Chapel Royal:

> The Elizabethan settlement enshrined in the 1559 Prayer Book was at first influenced to a great extent by Protestant elements. Outwardly the 1559 Prayer Book was merely the Edwardian 1552 Prayer Book in disguise. Tallis's work 'O Lord, give thy holy spirit'

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[1] These may have been more numerous than previously believed. 'Revisionist Historians' claim that:

> complex polyphonic music was not confined, as was once thought, to a tiny group of the largest and best-endowed churches. Even parish churches, particularly those in large urban centres such as London, Bristol, Norwich and York, were significant players at this level, paying for music to be copied and hiring outside singers when necessary

A. Wathey, *Op.Cit.* p42.

> exhibits similar constraints for it is no more elaborate[2] than the works he composed during the Edwardian reformation. However, his five-part Te Deum shows flashes of the Elizabethan choral renaissance that was to burst forth from the hands of Sheppard, Mundy and Parsons.[3]

Whether or not the pre-Reformation Scottish Chapel Royal Choir ever enjoyed high standards or even sang polyphony after the death of James IV is a moot point, but had his grandson, James VI, translated personal musical enthusiasms into action by insisting on quality in his post-Reformation Scottish Chapel Royal Choir it is possible to believe that a "centre of excellence" at Holyrood could have co-existed with a severely circumscribed parish and cathedral[4] musical regime elsewhere in Scotland. James's generally supportive[5] Scottish subjects would have surely tolerated minor eccentricities like organs and choral establishments - a Chapel Royal of sorts did survive at Holyrood until 1638 after all - particularly if he and his court had visited the country more frequently. Certainly the Edinburgh clergy seemed to have been loath to condemn organ-accompanied choral music out of hand on the occasion of his 1617 visit:

> these dumb doggs, the ministers of Edinburgh, were silent, neither disswading the King in private, nor opening their mouth in publick' ... [perhaps because they actually enjoyed hearing the] 'singing of [the English Chapel Royal] quiristers and the playing of organs ... in the Royall Chappell.[6]

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[2] It is however a magnificent piece of English Church Music. The magical harmonies at *all the days of our life* (complete with consecutive fifths!) never fail to thrill the sensitive listener.

[3] D. Baldwin, *The Chapel Royal Ancient and Modern*, p155.

[4] Both English and Scottish Reformers insisted that a cathedral was no more special than a parish church.

[5] Despite his bullying interference in the decisions of the General Assembly, James appears to have remained popular with a Scottish public apparently rather pleased that "their man" had become King of the UK.

[6] Scot, *Apologetical Narration*, p246 quoted in J. Inglis, *Op.Cit.*, p76.
In fairness to the critics among the congregation it should be noted that the obsequious words would have been deeply alienating and could hardly have helped the cause of either the nascent verse-anthem or the organ:

> Great king of gods, whose gracious hand hath led
> Our sacred sovereign head
> Unto the place where all our bliss was bred.
>
> And send thine angels to his blessed side,
> And bid them there abide,
> To be at once his guardian and his guide.
>
> Dear be his life, all glorious be his days,
> And prospering all his ways
> Late add thy last crown to his peace and praise.
>
> And when he hath outlived the world's long date,

Such a "centre of excellence" might have even spawned imitators at places like King's College, Aberdeen and those Collegiate Churches who had at least subscribed to notions of musical excellence in their pre-Reformation liturgical directions.

However there was also a significant element of self-inflicted disaster in the eventual demise of the Scottish Chapel Royal Choir, as it seems to have deteriorated as much from indifference on the part of management and singers as from lack of funding or interest from James VI and Charles I. Had the early 17th-century choristers taken pride and responsibility in such matters as attending regularly and learning the repertoire,[7] they might have saved themselves the humiliation of being replaced by the English Chapel Royal Choir, not only for James VI's visit to Scotland in 1617 but for that of Charles I in 1633. To add to their shame they would surely have suspected that Gibbons was quite possibly aware of the Scottish Chapel Royal Choir's limitations when he wrote *Great King of Gods* [8] for the former occasion since it is one of his simplest verse anthems. Indeed it is difficult to believe that even a barely competent choirmaster could not have taught an inexperienced choir this work in a couple of rehearsals, particularly when the adult members of the choir had been sufficiently well thought of musically (in former years at least) to be examiners for the important post of Master of the Edinburgh Song School.[9] The simple and tuneful choir parts are doubled on the organ (as was normal in the verse anthem) and the solo lines are straightforward. By the time of Charles I's visit, when Edward Kellie was in charge of the music, perhaps the singers were not up to singing any choral music whatever - whether or not their parts were doubled on the organ.

Kellie had claimed that on a visit to London:

Let thy last change translate
His living flesh to the celestial state. Amen.

7

... only seven of the twenty-five chapel prebendaries attended regularly. All they were able to attempt singing were the common psalm tunes, and even these were 'skarse knowen'

G. J. Munro, *Op. Cit.*, I.Woods Preece, *Op. Cit.*, p299. quoting C. Rogers, *Op. Cit.*, pcxxxxiii.

8 Gibbons wrote both this anthem and a court song *Do not repine, fair sun* for this visit
J. Harper,*New Grove, 2nd Edition, Vol 9*, p832.

9 In 1593 Edinburgh council appointed five men to audition an applicant for this post, and most of the examiners appear to have been musicians of the Scottish Chapel Royal.
Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh quoted in G. J. Munro, *Op Cit.*, p297.

> I caused make twelve great books, gilded and twelve small ones, with an organe-book wherein I caused write the said psalms, services and anthymnes. [10]

As with much Scottish musical history "documentation" it is wise to regard such statements with the greatest of caution. No music has survived to support Kellie's claims for example. It seems that Kellie was probably responsible for a shortfall[11] in the Chapel Royal Choir Funds which led him to be replaced by Edward Millar in 1634 so it is quite likely that he was less than truthful about the contents of the Chapel library. Charles I, himself, may in fact have been somewhat unconvinced about the state of the Choir:

> Whereas wee appoynted our seruant Edward Kellie, for the ordering of our Chapell royall, and being crediblie informed that he hath well furnished it with an expert organist [who?], singing men and boyes, and other things thereto belonging whereof wee doe hereby approue as good service...[12]

His "credible information" - hardly a ringing endorsement in itself - probably came from a letter written by Kellie when he was in London acquiring the 'twelve great books': Perhaps Charles' confidence that things were quite as rosy as painted had been seriously dented by Kellie's rider to his letter:

> ... or else I shall give tymouse advertisment unto your highnes that your musicians [English Chapel Royal Choir] here may be conveyed thither for the service, which will undoubtedly will be a great and needless charge , if your Majestie's servants at home can doe the same, all things being provided and ready for the purpose.

Needless to say, even a scandal surrounding the chapel funds should not have made it necessary to bring the English Chapel Royal Choir north in 1633 if the resident choir was in reasonable order.

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[10] 'Information touching the Chapell-Royal of Scotland written and signed at Whitehall 24th January 1631', C.Rogers, *Op. Cit.*, pclxvi.
[11] *Ibid.*, clxxxv.
[12] *Ibid.*, pclxv.

Kellie's successor, Edward Millar, is admired for his 1634 and 1635 Psalters though he does not appear to have been the exceptional musician the directorship of a Royal Chapel Choir should have implied.[13] What he actually achieved musically with the Choir goes unrecorded,[14] but the suggestion that he made the 1635 Psalter for it seems unlikely.[15] While not absolutely precluding their use in the Chapel Royal, the fact that the psalms were published in a form more suited to home performance[16] suggests Millar's main priority was not creating a repertoire for a rejuvenated Chapel Choir but producing examples of excellence which sometime in the future could possibly find their way into the services of the Scottish Church. In the meantime, the psalms could probably service the apparently widespread UK enthusiasm for psalm singing in the home. The evidence might suggest that the Chapel Choir succumbed in 1638 as much to an indifference to "classical music" on the part of all concerned, from Dean to Chorister, as to religious sensibilities[17] - an indifference, one would suspect, that was shared if not actually created by the Scottish public. The lack of skill on the part of the choir's establishment to create and perform contemporary music - especially anthems and services in verse-form- could only have made the choir's position even more untenable.

It would seem obvious to contrast Scotland's unhappy record in Church Music with that of England's "success", but by the early 19th century the English Choral Tradition had descended to almost the same dire straits as the early 17th-century Scottish Chapel Royal. English Church Music survived probably because it happened to be an issue - if only a minor one - among the Cambridge Camden Society's concerns about church ritual. Behaviour in the chapels during the Camden Society students' undergraduate years was at crisis point, and one of the first objectives of the Camden Society was to improve the College services.

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13 Like Thomas Wood of the St Andrews Psalter before him, he is modest in his estimate of his own proficiency in the musical art: in his own phrase he claims no more than 'poor talents'.

M. Patrick, *Op .Cit.*, p63.

14 The fact that the choir folded during his tenure suggests he did not have much success with it.

15 M. Patrick, *Op Cit.*, p 69.

16 The psalms were set out in madrigal fashion for people sitting round a table.

17 Scotland's ambivalence towards "protestant correctness" as exemplified by Charles I's executioner, Cromwell, extended to crowning Charles II King of Scotland for example.

Not only were the students undisciplined, but the staff were hardly much better in the slovenly and half-hearted fashion in which they conducted both themselves and the Chapel services; the Dean of Christ College in the 1830s:

> used to read alternative verses of the Psalms without making even a pretence of waiting for the congregation to take their share; and where the lesson was a lengthy one he would rise and go on with the canticles [N.B. read - the organ had been unplayable since 1765] after the scholar had read fifteen or twenty verses.[18]

Unsurprisingly the music was also 'radically bad' in colleges like King's, but:

> no-one noticed, no-one cared ... not one boy in the choir of 16 could sight sing, voice produce, phrase or attend to marks of expression.[19]

In these circumstances an organist like the unquestionably gifted Thomas Attwood Walmisley,[20] who played a relay of services in Trinity and St John's, could hardly have considered achieving high standards part of his duty though he 'fared somewhat better than some'.[21] Fortunately, thanks to some quality adult solo singers in King's, Trinity and St John's,[22] church music in Cambridge retained some integrity and was later to flower into better things in the late 19th century.

The original Camden musical *rationale* was a narrow one in which church music was part of ceremonial and ritual that emphasised historic catholic traditions and the aloofness of the church from petty secular concerns. That this was an almost anti-music, certainly an anti-contemporary classical music, stance is suggested by the

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18 *Life of Darwin,* quoted by B. Edmonds, 'Notes and Queries ' *BIOS Reporter* , October 2000.
19 W. E. Dickson quoted in D. Adelmann, *Op. Cit,.* p46. Not that things were any better in Oxford:

> Cyril Jackson [Dean of Christ Church] ... pronounced that a boy with no more ear nor a stone nor no more voice nor an ass" would make an excellent chorister; and by Gaisford, who appointed as singing men worn-out scouts and bedmakers.

W. Tuckwell, *Op. Cit.,* p69.
20 Walmisley had a distinguished academic career, unusual in that he was appointed Professor of Music in the University (1836) before being awarded his first degree (BA 1838).
21 D. Adelmann, *Op. Cit.,* p49.
22 For example:

> Trinity choir excelled especially in quartets and trios... adulation of soloists continued into 20th-century as long as professional lay clerks of note were retained by the colleges.

Ibid., p55.

recommended return to "archaic" plainsong and even to responsorial reading of the psalms if plainsong was unacceptable or too difficult. Dyce explained the presumably official line in characteristic hyperbolic style:

> I would rather a thousand times have a choir of men capable of no more than reading the psalms and responses with firm and united voices than a full chorus of practised singers after the modern taste place in the organ gallery.[23]

However wittingly or unwittingly, the Camden Society did encourage good music both as a group and individually - Benjamin Webb, one of the original members, was a seasoned choir founder for example. Under the Camden influence some London and Provincial Parish Churches installed surpliced choirs in their chancels and started taking their music seriously, but it was left to individual musicians with their own agendas to establish high standards in Cambridge during the latter part of the 19th century. Trinity College, Cambridge numbers among its organists Charles Villiers Stanford (1862-1924) and Alan Gray (1855-1935) - stalwarts of the 19th-century English musical renaissance, though it was pre-eminently the King's College Chapel Choir under Arthur Henry Mann during the years 1876 to 1929 that established choral excellence in the Church of England.

Stanford and Gray were scions of "establishment" families and did much to raise the profile and prestige of being a college organist. Stanford was a reluctant classical scholar and the organ post at Trinity provided him with a base to pursue his musical interests. One imagines that Gray's motivations were similar - he studied law but became a school music teacher before returning to Cambridge. Mann though came from a very humble background, which meant that through most of his career at Kings he was regarded as a servant - only in his later years did the college acknowledge him with a Fellowship. Mann's thorough training at the hands of Zachariah Buck in Norwich Cathedral had given him the technique to produce outstanding results and with his determination and musicianship success was almost inevitable. He introduced undergraduate choral scholars to sing the lower parts - presumably on the basis that young men could be made to see and sing things his way and would never be able to overstay their welcome. He also managed to get a choir school founded so that able boys would be attracted to audition for the choir.

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[23] *Dyce Papers*, p492.

The tradition of performance excellence in English church music, which is assumed to be centuries old, therefore has existed for little more than one, and then only in small pockets like two or three of the Cambridge Colleges and certain London churches like the Temple. As recently as seventy years ago, choral standards were not always impressive in some now famously musical Oxford colleges and good taste was certainly at a premium. Despite the present eminence of the Christ Church Cathedral Choir, Oxford, older graduates in the 1980s could fondly remember the organ's pedal ophicleide which 'Ley invariably used to accompany the response - 'There is none other that fightest for us - but only thou O God!'[24] A stylistic solecism - not to say vulgarity - which would be inconceivable now.

Boris Ord enhanced the reputation of the King's College Choir during his tenure of the post from 1929-1957 but it was his successor, David Willcocks, who established ideals of choral excellence that have spread to other Oxbridge Colleges and to UK church and secular choirs in general.

Some idea of the influence of the Oxbridge college chapels on British Choral music can be gauged from the number of top choir trainers both inside and outside the cathedrals and university chapels who were trained there.[25]

Instead of providing Scotland with equivalent "centres of excellence", in general, the Scottish University Chapels through the 20th century have had a negative rather than an inspirational effect on Scottish church music. While establishments like St Giles' Cathedral, Glasgow Cathedral, Paisley Abbey and St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, Edinburgh have always maintained choirs of the highest quality it would be surprising if their influence on Scottish youth could ever have been comparable to that of the University Chapel Choirs. The Chapel Choirs were composed entirely of talented young people able to explore challenging repertoire and to be responsive to new ideas if they were given the opportunity and leadership.

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[24] A. de Brisay, 'A long life-time of organ reminiscences', *Organists' Review* , October 1980, p8.

[25]

> As to training organists, the Oxbridge chapels with their choir schools remain the focus, particularly for organists interested in choral music... The intensity of the training, the acquired powers of concentration, the commitment, the ability to communicate on demand on a daily basis, the sheer professionalism learned in the choir stalls or in the organ loft rub off onto all other activities, often for life.

D. Lumsden, 'The place of the organist in British Musical Life', *Organists' Review* , October 1987, p297.

Of the four ancient Scottish Universities only Edinburgh does not have a chapel, though Glasgow acquired its Chapel, erected as a War Memorial, in 1929, five centuries after St Salvator's, St Andrews and King's, Aberdeen were built. As it happens Glasgow's predecessors were taken back into regular use as university chapels not much earlier, King's College Chapel in 1891 and St Salvator's in 1904. If the three chapels acquired their present appearances and uses in the not too distant past, the possibility that their services could or should espouse musical and liturgical "excellence" has arisen even more recently. Before Scottish University Chapel music is considered in more detail, the quite complex situation of the two older chapels within their universities needs to be explained.

St Salvator's was set up as a Collegiate Church. Pre-Reformation Collegiate churches housed a group of priests, 'the college', who were to say masses for the souls of the founders. It was not a university chapel on the Oxford and Cambridge model despite the injunctions to pray for the college founders in these places:

> The prevalent idea that Bishop Kennedy's principal foundation was a college, and that this building was merely the Chapel of the College is a very erroneous one, and ought to have been dispelled long ago. One has only to look at the building itself, standing hard upon the lines of the street, with its main entrance open to all the world, to see that it was something more than a college chapel. [26]

The qualification might seem of peripheral importance since the building was more or less abandoned as a place of worship at the Reformation, and the author of the above presumably did not envisage the resumption of daily masses. Despite catering for the same mixture of staff, students and general public the difference between a "dedicated" university chapel and a parish church with strong university connections was one with considerable potential for *angst* at both St Andrews and Aberdeen a century ago. Principal Sir William Geddes was clearly apprehensive when he embarked on the 1891 restoration of King's College Chapel:

> It was not alone the difficulty confronting us in appealing to the public for adequate support at a period of commercial depression, and in pleading for interests aesthetic and devotional, so apt to be overcome by interests secular and utilitarian; there was the formidable risk of possibly impairing by some false step the contour of the building

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[26] J. M. Anderson, 'The Collegiate Church of St Salvator St Andrews', *Transactions of the Scottish Ecclesiological Society*, 1904, p 216.

> which was entrusted to us; and there was further a reluctance which had to be overcome lest the restoration might perhaps offend more persons than it pleased, and awaken, in the breasts of not a few, feelings of a less amiable kind - animosities, even - at the sight of arrangements they might misjudge, the reasons for which they might not, without explanation, be in a position to understand.[27]

Later in his paper Geddes has to admit that the pressure to restore the chapel actually came from outwith the university:

> Foremost among the advocates urging such an undertaking were two gentlemen [Dr Webster of Edgehill and Sir George Reid PRSA] outside the Senatus, who, in season and sometimes out of season, pressed on the new Principal, who was called to office in the end of 1885, the duty and necessity of launching such a scheme of restoration.

He also has to reveal that the funds to do so were slow in materialising, which suggests that his disquiet about the whole restoration was well founded:

> It took a considerable time before the response came with sufficient clearness and volume to justify the Acting Committee appointed at that meeting in proceeding with the scheme.[28]

Principal Geddes does not actually specify what the possible causes of 'animosities' might be, but they may have included some of those identified by Sir John Donaldson (1831-1915) - at 84 still Principal of St Andrews University - in a privately printed pamphlet *Notes on the Report submitted by P MacGregor Chalmers Esq to the University Court for the Restoration of the Church of the United College in the University of St Andrews* in 1915. If nothing else the expense and questionable ethics of producing a polemical tract in wartime suggests that 'animosities' was not too strong a word.

Donaldson was opposed to any change in the building or its arrangements that would compromise his vision of it as a church 'which corresponds to St Mary's Oxford.'[29] Historic justification for the parallel is tenuous, though one could

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[27] W. Geddes, 'Notes on the Restoration of King's College Chapel', *Transactions of the Aberdeen Ecclesiological Society*, 1892, p61

[28] *Ibid.*, p64.

[29] J. Donaldson, *Notes on the report submitted by P MacGregor Chalmers Esq. to the University Court for the Restoration of the Church of the United College in the University of St Andrews* p15.

certainly see Donaldson wishing that the past and present of St Salvator's did match that of St Mary's in most respects:

> St Mary's stands in the physical centre of the old walled City, and the university grew up round it. In medieval times scholars lived in houses with their teachers and the university had no buildings of its own, so it adopted St Mary's as its centre. The church continued as a parish church but by the early 13th century it had become the seat of university government, academic disputation, and the award of degrees.
>
> All university business was removed from the church by the middle of the 17th century, but St Mary's remains the place where the university formally comes to worship. On most Sundays during term time, the formal university sermon is preached here, before the vice-chancellor and proctors, who enter with full ceremonial procession to their throne-like seats at the back of the nave.[30]

It may be only pedantry to object that even before the Reformation the roles of both St Salvator's and King's within their university structures were completely different from that of St Mary's and Oxford but the real bone of contention was the seemingly peripheral matter of the seating arangements. It appears the proposed seating on normal Oxbridge Chapel lines in St Salvator's and quite possibly the extant ones in King's (where the old stalls still existed and where some of the seats were arranged collegiately as can be seen from a 1893 photograph)[31] were the main cause of tension and 'animosities'.

As Donaldson makes clear, it was the prospect of men and women facing each other that was particularly horrifying:

> Disestablishment would make a great alteration in all the religious arrangements and if women were ever admitted to the privileges of the Universities [much] would have to be altered, for it is impossible to suppose that the women would be placed face to face with the men.[32]

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[30] *Great St Mary's Oxford Website,* June 2001.
[31] See Appendix p305.
[32] J. Donaldson, *Op. Cit.,* p13. What Donaldson means by women being admitted to the privileges of the Universities at disestablishment is not clear. As the Established, the United Free and United Presbyterians moved towards re-union, disestablishment was a matter of some (financial) consequence in Scotland but if "establishment" Oxford and Cambridge did not allow women to graduate in 1916 this was not true of Scotland where women had been admitted to degrees from 1892 onwards.

Predictably, this unhappy situation did not exist in St Mary's Oxford where the congregational pews are arranged normally. Donaldson only tolerated the seven oak pews for the professors installed by Principal Forbes in St Salvator's because of 'the duty to respect the wishes of the donor' but in all other matters 'no distinction should be exhibited' between staff and students. Nearly all Donaldson's concerns seem to have "nuances". Because the sloped floor gave good sightlines 'as in the lecture theatres', for example, he was opposed to the floor being flattened 'like an Anglican chapel'. Modifications to the gallery would incovenience the choir, which presumably might then have been tempted to sing at floor level - again 'like an anglican chapel'.

> The gallery that exists[33] will be much more suitable for the body of students that form our choir than the proposed gallery. What is meant by its 'original use' none can understand, for there was no gallery in the church originally, so far as is known.[34]

The similarity between the 1915 MacGregor Chalmers' seating plan[35] to that carried out at the last minute in the 1929 Fairlie restoration suggests that some Court members had always been in favour of this particular "crypto-Oxbridge" arrangement!

Donaldson was also nervous that:

> When we were urging our students to rise at the entrance of our Maces, many of them expressed a strong feeling that no distinction should be exhibited, that all were the children of one God, and they should be recognised as children of the one God.[36]

It is clear that Donaldson regarded anything that would make St Salvator's different from an ordinary parish church with a great deal of suspicion. Restoring St Salvator's to exclusive university use was obviously not seen as an opportunity to provide innovative leadership in matters of worship and music.

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[33] Both MacGregor Chalmers and R. H. Lorimer proposed reducing the gallery dimensions in their plans for the Chapel.
[34] One wonders how access to the tower was achieved if there was not some form of gallery at the back of the chapel - not to mention the point of the spiral stair, unless it was an 18th-century intrusion of course.
[35] See Appendix p305.
[36] J. Donaldson, *Op. Cit.*, p16.

The promise made at the opening service of some of the 'foremost preachers in the country' occupying the St Salvator's pulpit may or may not have been honoured - there are only three Lists of Preachers for the Year extant, but the music always seems to have been left to staff members, among whom was Mr, later Dr, H. J. Thomson, Lecturer in Latin and Assistant to the Professor of Humanities. Hopefully he found the work more fulfilling than his contemporary Miss Christie, the first organist of the restored King's College, Aberdeen who summarily dismissed the role of music and musicians in the chapel:

> Music was of the most elementary description and no self-respecting organist would have dreamt of applying for the post.[37]

Since the appointment of Frederick Sawyer (1874 -1947) as University Organist and Lecturer in Music in 1925 however, the music in St Salvator's Chapel has always been under the direction of professionally qualified musicians. It would be interesting to know what the original motivation was for employing a professional at St Salvator's but the Court Minutes are silent on the matter. The post was not advertised and Sawyer's appointment (presumably a personal one) was announced without comment by the Principal, Sir James Irvine. The salary offered was £300 for directing the chapel music and running a course of lectures.

At King's the main musical concern in its early days as a university chapel seems to have been to have a competent organist at the lowest possible cost. When Albert Adams FRCO resigned in 1937 the Religious Council recommended a temporary arrangement of appointing a second year arts student, Alastair David Macdonald,[38] to the post at a salary of £52.10 (Adams had received £38.10 as the Chapel component of his university salary of £100.16).[39] This appears to have fallen through, and

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[37] R. Williams, 'Music and Musicians since 1500', J. Geddes, *Op.Cit.*, p 170.

[38] Macdonald subsequently won an organ scholarship to Cambridge. He was killed on active service during the war. A succession of organ scholars to run the Chapel Music as at some Oxbridge colleges, was also considered by the Committee.

[39] Adams salary breakdown was

For Chapel	£38.10
For Marischal College	£ 14
For Music Hour	£ 31.10
For Art Lectures in Music	£ 16.16
Total	£100.16

When there were degree students in music Mr Swainson got £50.
Religious Council Minutes, 27 07 1937.

another temporary solution was proposed whereby the Director of Music at Aberdeen [Teacher] Training College, Alexander Hendry, was to take the job for a year - again for a salary of £52.10. The Committee recognised that to make a suitable permanent appointment it would be necessary for the Court to raise the salary offered but this it seemed very reluctant to do.

The long term solution which the Principal (Hamilton Fyfe) in particular favoured was to combine the post of Music Lecturer and Organist and create a post of Director of Music for the university. There was already in post a Music Lecturer, Willan Swainson, who taught those students who wished to avail themselves of music as 'an alternative to Architecture in the subjects constituting the Fine Arts Course for the Degree of Master of Arts (MA)'.[40] Swainson was then organist of the West Church of St Nicholas with a lengthy record of achievement in the city's music behind him and his credentials at least would appear to have made him an ideal Director of Music. Despite Swainson's ten year service at the university there seems to have been some fear that he 'would not appeal very strongly to the students',[41] but the minutes make clear that the most telling objection to Swainson was the matter of salary. Understandably Swainson was reluctant to give up the West Church of St Nicholas where his salary was £150, for the £52.10 offered at King's. Various suggestions of combining the organ posts at the West Church and King's which Swainson made were rejected. Only after a year's 'unsatisfactory' "stand-off" during Hendry's temporary appointment as organist was Swainson offered the combined post at the hardly munificent salary of £200 to take effect from 1st October 1940 - presumably other avenues like appointing the 'popular with the students' Arnold Shields[42] could not be pursued because of the war. This rather unsavoury episode reveals that while competent music was welcome in the chapel, paying a competitive salary - even by Aberdeen city standards - was only reluctantly accepted. Aberdeen University, to its credit, did later handsomely make up for its lukewarm welcome to Swainson by awarding him an Honorary MA and an appointment as Reader in Music.

Despite the affection with which they are now regarded, the Scottish university chapels are in an ambivalent situation as Donaldson possibly realised. Unlike the "musical" college chapels in Oxford, Cambridge and Durham which are in the main unashamedly "Anglican cathedral" in the liturgy and repertoire of their services

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[40] *Aberdeen University Court Minutes*, 13 11 1928.
[41] *Aberdeen University Chapel Minutes*, 09 02 1938.
[42] Later the Scottish Education Department Music HMI.

and are accepted by students and staff of what ever religious hue as such, no such consensus exists in Scotland. Before the advent of full time chaplains Scottish university chapels were run like Church of Scotland parish churches - with only an academic procession demonstrating the university connection. Since then any changes in liturgical and musical matters in University Chapels seem merely to have reflected the concerns of the chaplain and possibly even more strongly, those of the organist and choirmaster. A Chaplain like the Revd. MacArthur at King's insisted that:

> The University Chapel should set a high standard in public worship and all true reform of Scottish worship must have as its form the unachieved aim of the Calvinistic Reformation ....[43]

What MacArthur implies by realising the unachieved aims of the Calvinistic Reformation is not absolutely clear but his concerns do seem to have been more directed towards increasing the number of Communions celebrated in the chapel than on matters of musical repertoire. The Organists in general have therefore had the liturgical field to themselves, with results that have varied from "high" to "low" church.

Sawyer, for example, wrote responses and compiled a prose psalter for St Salvator's 'pointed to his own scheme'[44] while his successor, Cedric Thorpe Davie, declined to have any choral music other than psalms and hymns at services.

Quite how a Scottish university chapel should operate even in an ideal world is difficult to determine. For a start if a chapel aims to cater for everybody, the inevitable inter-denominational type of service is not always agreeable to say Anglican, evangelically-minded and RC students - large sections of its potential constituency. To this undefined stance must be added a non-congregational ambience which is only reinforced if there is an enthusiastic choir anxious to make its contribution.

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[43] *Aberdeen University Chapel Minutes* , 02 04 1939.

[44] *St Andrews University Court Minutes* 1927/8 p114 [the cost £90.16/- for 500 copies was a considerable investment. Mr and Mrs Sawyer had given £300 of their own money for the 1925 chapel organ rebuild, so the Court was presumably quite willing to indulge its organist in the matter of Psalters.

Not at Glasgow apparently - the University Chapel seems to have found a generally accepted role as soon as it was built:

> The chapel was built in a great era of liberal Christianity in Britain. At the time of its building the Student Christian Movement was by far the biggest student organisation. The openness of both church and university to the findings of a common search for that which is to be trusted was still unbroken.[45]

In the 1950s the chaplain could report between 130 and 150 young men and women finding it 'worthwhile to get themselves to Gilmorehill on weekdays to begin the day with morning prayers'.[46]

It was also very well supported even on Sundays when the majority of students were at home:

> The members of the Senate were punctilious attenders at services, with some of them making impressive contributions to the singing - notably Professor Howe with his enthusiastic rendering of bass parts. Sunday mornings saw a general exodus of gowned and hooded professors and their families from the doors of the tall houses.[47]

The gowned and hooded professors in academic procession and the "claustrophobic" university atmosphere in chapel is something that students and staff may nowadays wish to avoid on a Sunday. Not surprisingly many university members prefer the fellowship of a local Parish Church, particularly when there lurks a nagging fear that the service in the university chapel is as much an academic occasion as a religious one.

Inevitably Donaldson had an apt quotation - again referring to Oxbridge:[48]

> Yet a religiously-minded undergraduate is seldom able to satisfy his soul with the services of his college chapel: often he would be surprised if anyone suggested that he could ... The services themselves are not of a character to arouse the enthusiasm of anybody, whatever his views may be.[49]

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[45] A. D. Galloway, 'The University Chapel: Jubilee Year',*The College Courant*, 1979, p15.
[46] H. McIntosh, 'The chapel and its activities', *Ibid.*, 1955, p44.
[47] *Ibid.*
[48] Donaldson himself was a graduate of Marischal College, Aberdeen.
[49] A. M. M. Stedman, *Oxford; Its life and Schools* quoted in J. Donaldson, *Op. Cit.*, p10.

The close identification of the the chapels with the university establishment also effects their relationships with the Divinity Faculties. It would seem only economic good sense that the chapels should be run by the faculty staff, as was the case with Aberdeen and St Andrews from the turn of the 19th- and 20th-centuries. Nevertheless the prospect of attending a chapel service which promised to be another lecture or seminar seems not to have been overly attractive to students or staff - certainly in Aberdeen!

> The professors fulfilled their duties [from 1860 after the amalgamation of King's and Marischal Colleges] as Murray lecturers by conducting in rotation public worship in the college chapel on Sundays. According to Stephen Ree the services 'were not of a specially attractive nature'. Instrumental music was excluded and for a time even a choir was unknown. Whatever their gifts as scholars and teachers, the professors were not pulpit orators.[50]

It may well be that the popularity Glasgow University Chapel enjoyed from the start was due to its high-calibre, non-Divinity Faculty Chaplains, some of whom were to become considerable figures in the Church at large. A C Craig (Chaplain 1930-1939) and J F McCluskey (Chaplain 1939-47) were both to become Moderators of the General Assembly. One writer was adamant that this was so:

> When the Rev Archie Craig took over as Chaplain the chapel came to life. He organised morning services before classes and formed a small choir to lead the singing, of which some of us became members. There could have been no more stimulating choirmaster as he stood there with a tuning fork and took us through the harmonies of the Hymn Book.[51]

The happy record of Glasgow University Chapel in its early years does not suggest any real commitment to musical or liturgical innovation, however. Rather under the direction of charismatic chaplains the daily chapel services seem to have provided companionship and spiritual direction to generations of students whose interest in church music may have barely extended beyond hymns - not that those who in their youth rather enjoyed a good sing at the beginning of the school day will have any difficulty in identifying with such sentiments.

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[50] H. R. Sefton, 'Post-Reformation Worship', J. Geddes, *Op. Cit.*, p167.
[51] A. D. Galloway, *Op. Cit.*

It is fascinating to conjecture how the post World War II Scottish university chapel might have evolved had the then high-profile ex-*Radio Padre,* Ronald Selby Wright, accepted either the invitation of Aberdeen or St Andrews to be its first full-time chaplain after World War II. Initially Selby Wright was informally sounded out about the Principalship of St Mary's by St Andrews in 1954 and he was clearly quite tempted:

> Since there is no Chaplaincy at St Andrews would the Court be prepared to include in the Principalship the Chaplaincy and the responsibility of the Chapel?

In 1956 he was offered and put under considerable pressure to accept the Chaplaincy at St Andrews. This was a call he regarded as very special and more serious than he had ever had before.

And that for several reasons.

> (1) This was the second "'call" to go to St Andrews in a short space of time.
>
> (2) I had made no approach myself and indeed had opposed it, yet 95% of my friends whose opinion I most valued, had advised me to accept.
>
> (3) There was obviously a need for such an appointment, especially in a residential University of students who were potential leaders of the future.
>
> (4) I would be returning to my happiest days as a padre.
>
> (5) I would have two beautiful Chapels.[52]

If Selby Wright had gone to St Andrews he may well have been as effective as Craig had been at Glasgow or Mervyn Stockwood was to be at Great St Mary's, Cambridge. Theoretically, a major personality like Selby Wright would have had the authority to innovate musically and liturgically, despite the preference for extremely plain services of the then chapel organist, Thorpe Davie. Selby Wright may well have given the St Salvator's services a unique character which could have echoed throughout the Church of Scotland. Needless to say there were European Reformed Musical Traditions other than English ones which might have inspired Selby

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52 R. Selby Wright, *Another Home,* p194.

Wright had he come to St Salvator's. On the other hand, without the freedom that he enjoyed at the Canongate Kirk, Edinburgh, he may have found the forces of reactionism as represented by Thorpe Davie and the shades of Principal Donaldson terminally frustrating.

Not only have university staff curtailed the university chapels' ability to innovate, but, sadly, the students themselves in the first half of the 20th century seem to have been unenthusiastic about participating in choirs and to be very suspicious of anything approaching "high church" practice. Running a Chapel Choir in a small well- integrated university like St Andrews during the 1930s, for example, would not appear to have been a overly demanding challenge, yet Sawyer had his problems. The choir always seems to have been small and very short of men who, in those days apparently regarded choral singing as 'sissy'.[53] St Andrews was not alone in this: J. M. Bulloch regretfully noted the mainly girls' choir in King's College Chapel, Aberdeen at the 400th anniversary celebrations in 1906:

> What would Elphinstone lying there in his pilfered tomb have thought of the choir in the organ loft being occupied almost entirely by girls?[54]

Both the King's and the St Salvator's Choirs' singing of fairly standard items in the inter-War years was reportedly very musical however.[55] Later Swainson seems to have found things heavy going. In 1940 he surprisingly reported that a choir composed entirely of students was 'most unsatisfactory':

> 1/3rd of the choir left at the end of the year staying for not more than 3 or 4 years at the most the result was that the choir master was continually training people that he was unable to get the use of. He suggested that there should be a permanent nucleus of 12-16

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53 Evidence from Mrs Sykes who was present at the first service in the restored St Salvator's Chapel in 1930.

54 J. M. Bulloch, 'The Celebrations, Tuesday 25th September '*Record of the Quatercentenary*, p77.

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> But some idea of the musical standards achieved may be deduced from the success she [Miss Christie] achieved at the Glasgow Competitive Festival.

R. Williams, *Op. Cit.*, p170.
A recording made of the St Salvator's Chapel Choir in 1935 reveals a small but well balanced choir of considerable effectiveness.

> voices and that more stringent rules should be imposed on students with regard to their attendance at practices etc.[56]

Despite a reasonable salary Sawyer's role in St Andrews University must have seemed slightly peripheral both to him and the students.[57] His lecture course on music, given from 1926 onwards, did not count towards a degree for example. The lack of support for the chapel choir from male students may only have increased this feeling of marginalisation.

Being marginalised, however, was not a fate likely to befall his successor, Cedric Thorpe Davie (1913-1983) who was invited to take responsibility for the music in St Salvator's in 1945. Thorpe Davie and Frederick Rimmer (1914-1999) are the two major figures in Scottish Chapel music and their different attitudes to church music illustrate the mixed messages Scottish university chapel music has given the rest of the Scottish Church from the early 20th. century to the present.

Thorpe Davie had been educated at the Royal College of Music and the Royal Academy of Music in London, of which latter institution he was to become a Fellow in April 1955.

Regular performances of Thorpe Davie compositions in concert hall and on the BBC during and after his student days promised a brilliant career, despite some reservations among critics and colleagues: in a 1937 letter to Howard Ferguson his friend Gerald Finzi, for example, noted that he was:

> .... was not convinced by his [Thorpe Davie's] creativity ... I think what you feel about the something bound up with his whole character which will prevent him being a real composer is that his nature lacks the upper and lower notes of the scale.

He also suspected that the urge to compose would recede:

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[56] *Aberdeen University Chapel Committee Minutes,* 20 12 1940. It goes without saying that mixed Oxbridge Chapel Choirs only have their students for a maximum of three years and this does not seem to be a problem.

[57] See Appendix page 257. It will also be noted that the original intention that Sawyer should lecture to the Divinity Students was dropped.

> its disappearance ... made all the more easy and painless by his having a teaching routine now that he was on the staff of SNAM [Scottish National Academy of Music now the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama][58]

What exactly Finzi meant by the upper and lower notes of the scale is obscure - other than presumably some form of allusion to what he perceived as Thorpe Davie's lack of "commitment" and "range" - but in one way his comments were prophetic. In later years Thorpe Davie himself was to ascribe his scanty output of major works to both his facility for incidental music and to his work for young people and amateurs:

> Among his teachers was Vaughan Williams, whose style profoundly influenced his work, as did Sibelius. His knack of writing effectively at high speed for film, theatre and radio may have drawn him away to some extent from more permanent forms, of which his output is rather scanty compared with Whyte or Chisholm. A good deal of his work was designed for performance by young people or amateurs, with whom he was associated during his long academic life at the University of St Andrews'.[59]

The award of a Caird Senior Scholarship in 1935 had enabled Thorpe Davie to travel to Budapest, Vienna and Helsinki where he made many friends among musicians of international stature, including Kodaly and Sibelius. Somewhat surprisingly he then opted to study with the Finnish composer Kilpinen,[60] whom he championed for many years but whose compositions are now completely forgotten. Was this an early example of Thorpe Davie's tendency to precipitate and not always best-considered action? Throughout his life, for example, he was particularly prone to the somewhat intemperate, if well-turned, phrase which must have frequently alienated both friend and foe.

The lack of a musical tradition in Scotland was a matter upon which Thorpe Davie often commented for example. In his book *Scotland's Music* he sets out his arguments with balance and perception but too often he launched salvos in a way that seemed calculated to upset:

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58 S. Banfield, *Gerald Finzi*, p225.
59 C. Thorpe Davie, *Scotland's Music*, p50.
60 Yryö Kilpinen, (1892-1959). Taught at Helsinki Conservatoire. A pension enabled him to compose. He wrote over 800 songs.

> Cedric Thorpe Davie doubted whether we had ever produced an executant of the very first rank. Genuine folk songs were known only to a few specialists and practically nobody was technically fit to sing them anyway. The so-called Scots songs were largely the compositions of Englishmen and Italians composed between the Restoration and the Regency. Some more recent ones were associated with a state of intoxication and indeed were fit for nothing else.[61]

Thorpe Davie's views on Scottish church music were equally pithy and uncompromising. Simply put, there wasn't any - apart from the old Scots Psalm Tunes of which he was an avowed admirer - and there was not much that could be done about it. Thorpe Davie is reported as saying in the *Stirling Observer*:

> I would dearly like to see my way clear with you here, to making my own contribution along with you here to the establishment of music as a vital part of worship in the Church of Scotland, as it is, or has been, in some other branches of the Christian Church.

Bearing in mind the impact Willcocks was then making at King's College Chapel, Cambridge on standards, repertoire, hymn and choral arrangements, it might be suggested that Thorpe Davie's stance was one that conveniently absolved him from exploring areas in which he was not interested:

> "And so we reach the question of the future of Scottish Church Music," he said, "and it seems to me that we have two alternatives. Music in relation to the Scottish Church service must be expected to fulfill one or other of two functions: (1) to adorn, and be part of, an already meaningful and carefully planned liturgy; or (2) to make a dry service more attractive and help fill the pews."
>
> "Now on the first point," he continued, " there is no liturgy and set forms are the very negation of the first principles of our church as we know them up to this date. The bringing in of anthems, introits, responses and the rest are betrayals of those principles inasmuch as they do nothing to forward the accepted method of approach to the Almighty, and in fact they obstruct it by diverting the attention of the congregation." He added that, if they were to be given any meaning, the method of approach to God must be changed. This would imply the setting up of a liturgical pattern of worship in which canticles, hymns, etc., had a set function.

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61 *Dundee Courier*, April 1947.

> "In my view it would mean the end of the C[hurch] of S[cotland] as such". he said. "The logical thing would be for every one to join the Episcopal or Roman Church where there is a liturgy, and for us to devote our attention as church musicans to developing and improving the musical contribution to those liturgies - which is absurd, as the logicians say."[62]

Commenting on a newspaper report of a speech where the lecturer had seemed fully intent on "winding up" his audience (in this case a meeting of church organists) might seem ill-judged, were it not that so many of Thorpe Davie's more extreme remarks do seem to represent his considered views. These do not always appear to have been worked through with the thoroughness which informed his teaching and academic work.

"Set forms" are surely not the 'very negation of the first principles of our church', as the *John Knox Liturgy* could be used to prove, but even if they were this does not preclude the imaginative use of liturgical music in later centuries. Andrew Stewart Todd, when Minister of St Machar's Cathedral, Aberdeen, for example, was always anxious that music should be 'contexted' and from his wide knowledge of the repertoire he would order his services to ensure that any piece of music which he felt could enhance the liturgy made its point at the right moment. Having a fine choir at his disposal was an inspiration for liturgical experiment and development; neither he nor his organist[63] and choir ever regarded music's role as making a 'dry service more attractive'.

Quite what Thorpe Davie meant by canticles and hymns having a "set function" is not obvious. If he meant no more than that the *Te Deum* always appears at Mattins and the *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis* at Evensong in Anglican services there was still absolutely no reason why the Church of Scotland should not use these canticles in its services as and when deemed most expedient. The canticles have prompted some of the best music ever written for the church and:

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[62] *Stirling Observer*, 03 03 1962.

[63] David Murray (organist of St Machar's Cathedral 1954-82) who was one of the Musical Editors of *CH3*.

> those congregations who bring them imaginatively and contextually into their worship do not merely enrich their worship-life, rather as Alexander Pope said, and Martial long before him, they live twice.[64]

Unquestionably there is a particular satisfaction for a choir member in singing a fine canticle setting; he or she is always aware that the text has inspired generations of the finest composers. Although Thorpe Davie gave concert performances of Britten's *Festival* and *C major Te Deums* and the Finzi *Magnificat* amongst others, in general this particular privilege was denied the St Salvator's choir.

The remarks reported in the *Stirling Observer* articulate very comfortably with a piece about Thorpe Davie which appeared in *Life and Work*:

> In church music his taste is conservative. Only the best is worthy to be offered to the Almighty. He feels grateful that he need not pander to low standards or vulgar taste and that members of his Chapel Choir end their course with an ear unimpaired by poor and worthless music. That is why his Songs of Praise [TV Broadcast] has been so popular in the right sense. Here is the cream of Church music, for Mr Davie allows nothing faulty in his list, and everything is rehearsed to near perfection.
>
> The new hymn book [*CH3* to which Thorpe Davie declined to contribute[65]], he hopes, will reject dross and include new hymns (but not 'pop' music). The Gelineau psalm tunes he considers insipid, and unnecessary when we have the Scottish Psalter. Hymns may seem to be simple, but cannot be successful unless expressed in fine language at once technically sound, fitting and reverent. For these lines a tune must be found, beautiful in itself, which fits the words and does no violence to their natural accent. Relatively few hymns fulfill all these conditions but only these conditions will produce great hymns.[66]

The hymns in the Songs of Praise broadcast on 12th May 1968 referred to were:

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[64] A. Stewart Todd, 'The Canticles and the People's Part in the Divine Service', *Handbook to the Church Hymnary Third Edition* , p44.
[65] Thorpe Davie was sent two *CH3* texts but found them so unsympathetic that he felt unable to provide settings - information from Dr D. M. Smith.
[66] I. Dickie, *Life and Work,* February 1969.

O send thy light forth (Martyrs)
Sing to the Lord (Gonfalon Royal)
Spirit of God (Song 22)
Eternal Ruler (Song 1)
The Lord will come and not be slow (Psalm 107)
All hail the power of Jesus' name (Miles Lane)
God is our refuge (Stroudwater)
Christ is the world's redeemer (Moville)
All praise to thee my God this night (Tallis's Canon)
Father again in Jesus' name we meet (Magda)

Hely Almond would have approved of this list! He would not have known *Gonfalon Royal* or *Magda* but the vigour of the former and the elegant simplicity of the latter would certainly have commended themselves to him. But great hymns are here to 'inspire, instruct, uplift, challenge and encourage'[67]not to be exemplars of fine language and beautiful tunes. Thorpe Davie's choices - one would be surprised if they were not his[68] - may indeed 'instruct' but in nearly every other way they appear narrow and somewhat joyless.

Only a few Orders of Services in St Salvator's Chapel have survived from Thorpe Davie's time - there are none in his four volumes of programmes and press cuttings. The Carol Service for Sunday 10th September, 1972 is the most imaginative of the three which the present writer has been able to examine yet there is little in it which suggests a tremendous commitment to the joys of the season. Indeed the rubrics (my underlinings) verge on the ungracious:

UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS

ANNUAL CAROL SERVICE

SUNDAY, 10 DECEMBER, 1972 AT 8.00 P.M.

The Service will proceed without announcement of each carol.
The congregation will stand for the singing of the carols indicated and sit for the others.

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67 I. Bradley, *Op. Cit.*, p24
68 St Andrews University Chaplains were told which hymns were acceptable while those from Thorpe Davie's "Black List" were proscribed.

CONGREGATION:	While humble Shepherds (RCH 42)
	PRAYERS
CONGREGATION	Angels from the realms of glory (OBC 119)
	(V3 men, V4 women)
CHOIR	O come, O come Immanuel
CONGREGATION	As with gladness men of old (RCH 63)
	FIRST LESSON - Isaiah 9 v2, 6-7
CONGREGATION	Once in Royal David's City (RCH 69)
CHOIR	Here we come a-wassailing
CONGREGATION	Joseph dearest, Joseph mine (OBC 77)
	(Congregation sing the choruses only)
	SECOND LESSON - ST. LUKE 1, v26-33
CONGREGATION	Let Christians all with joyful mirth (OBC 20)
CHOIR	Ecce Novum Gaudium
CONGREGATION	Job (OBC 60) (V1 men, v3 women)
	THIRD LESSON - ST LUKE 2, v 3-16
CONGREGATION	Rejoice and be merry (OBC 25)
CHOIR	O earth be hushed
CONGREGATION	Still the night (RCH 49)
	PRAYERS
CONGREGATION	Adeste fideles, laeti triumphantes (3 verses)
	BLESSING[69]

[69] Within the constraints of an A5 sheet of paper it was surely possible to be a little less brusque. For example:

Hymns and carols are unannounced.

After such an understated and conservative Carol Service it will come as no surprise to learn that Thorpe Davie unabashedly regarded the St Salvator's Choir as a choral society specialising in the larger masterpieces of church music:

> Ten years ago a decision had to be made as to whether it [the Chapel Choir] was to confine its activities to the services in Chapel, or branch out into the learning and occasional public performance of larger-scale church-music. Once the latter policy was decided on, it became inevitable that the music of the Sunday services should be largely confined to congregational praise: this is the explanation, which many people have sought, of the very plain nature of the services so far as music is concerned.[70]

It has to be noted that at a time of high achievement in Glasgow University Chapel's music some potential attenders there would have applauded Thorpe Davie's exclusionist attitude:

> Some frankly prefer the plainer service provided at Wellington and a few seem to be shocked to find the chapel induging in such "high church" practices as the singing of anthems and the chanting of prose psalms.[71]

In the 1950s the St Salvator's Chapel Choir was probably the only choir in St Andrews able to negotiate the following typical - and very demanding - programme, and there is no question the music was valuable and eminently worthy of performance. On a "time and place for everything" basis it could perhaps be argued that Thorpe Davie had justification for his priorities.

> You are invited to stand and join in the singing of the congregational carols. Please sit for the choir items. [25 words - as in the original].

It would also have been courteous to have identified the sources and arrangers of the carols:

> Ecce Novum Gaudium (Old Scottish arranged Kenneth Elliott).
> [Elliott is probably the most distinguished 20th-century Scottish Music Historian. He was an undergraduate at St Andrews during Thorpe Davie's time.]
> O earth be hushed (Cedric Thorpe Davie).

As it stands the service sheet has as much suggestion of "dog" as "babe" in the manger.

[70] C. Thorpe Davie, 'The Singing University', *Alumnus Chronicle*, 1957, p11. As can be seen in Chapter 7 this view was shared by the Psalmody and Hymns Committee of the Church of Scotland in 1906, so there was some official precedent for Thorpe Davie's views.

[71] H. Macintosh, *Op. Cit.*

Chapel Choir Concert 6th May 1962

Dettingen Te Deum	Handel
O Bone Jesu	Carver
Benedicite	Vaughan Williams

The concert, despite the 'hearty uncertainties of the accompanying instruments' was positively reviewed in the *Scotsman* by the distinguished critic, Christopher Grier, while the Carver, which was later recorded and broadcast by the BBC, attracted special praise.

If it is suspected that the then St Salvator's Choir was not altogether justified in making such a low profile contribution to the university services, the fact remains that only in later years were other groups able to take over the role of providers of "large canvas" church music in St Andrews. The University Renaissance Group was to make Robert Carver's music a special object of its work, for example, and the St Andrews Chorus in many ways has become the heirs to the Thorpe Davie St Salvator's Choir - literally when it borrows sets of chapel copies from the Thorpe Davie era. It has to be noted that pressure seems never to have been brought on Thorpe Davie to include liturgical music in the Chapel Services. Even in the "singing university" the St Andrews "secular authorities" did not regard music in its chapel services as a matter of any urgency.

Perforce, as well as for preference, the St Salvator's Chapel choir since Thorpe Davie's time has increasingly become a liturgical choir, so much so that now, with the exception of occasional performances of the Duruflé *Requiem*, its repertoire consists entirely of 'anthems, introits, responses and the rest'.[72]

Changing student taste has encouraged this move to liturgical music. One doubts if members of the 1950s and 60s Chapel Choir would have wished to sing a weekday choral evensong with a congregation of thirty when most of their concerts had to be repeated to accommodate the full houses that were then usual. Hopefully the efflorescence of the following was not typical of St Andrews University undergraduate writing in 1949, but one imagines that at least some of the sentiments were shared by the student community:

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[72] *Stirling Observer.*

> Some of us are allergic to places of worship; we tend to treat church music with suspicion, either because of our Presbyterian upbringing or because, from other motives, we think of it in terms of ritual; a magic art, we are apt to call it, intending magical in its worst sense, and meaning that we refused to be influenced by it. Yet it would be a pity if what is only another form of prejudice were to rob true virtue of its just reward. Hence this minor paean of praise. .... Perhaps we may even hope that under an assumed name they [the chapel choir members] will find it convenient to perform in a larger and more public place and thus permit the applause which they so richly deserved and which we were itching to give.[73]

It is not the Huddersfield or Sheffield Choral Unions of Thorpe Davie's era at St Salvator's which are the models for today's student choristers, but the chapel choirs of *inter alia* Trinity and Clare Colleges, Cambridge. Perhaps when in 1988 Richard Marlow disbanded the Cambridge University Chamber Choir which 'had won critical acclaim worldwide for its enterprising performances ... to devote more time to the recently-formed mixed choir of Trinity College'[74] that sings Evensong three or four times a week, he realised the satisfaction that students would get from singing liturgical music in a liturgical setting. The very full attendances at weekday Choral Evensongs and the anxiety of the present St Salvator's Choir to sing them well suggests that this is equally true of St Andrews. It goes without saying that the standards achieved at Trinity and Clare are due to talented students, inspired direction and a lot of hard work - a Cambridge Undergraduate Chorister in a top choir will expect to spend up to 14 hours a week at rehearsals and services. He or she will also be expected to be note-perfect before attending a rehearsal. Such a regime might be possible in the Scottish universities but it would involve a radical reappraisal of all the musical arrangements in them. Small international-class choirs however are such a part of the Oxbridge scene, that the number of colleges appointing full-time music directors is actually increasing - witness the appointment in 1999 of a Director of Music at Jesus College, Cambridge to take over the chapel choirs which had previously been left in the hands of the students themselves. It is not necessary to labour the point that students in the older UK

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[73] Review of St Salvator's Chapel Concert which took place on 24th April 1949. The programme was:

Te Deum and Jubilate	Purcell
Seven Last Words	Schütz
Lo, the full Final Sacrifice	Finzi
Cantata 150	J S Bach

College Echoes, 1949.

[74] R. Marlow, *Bach The Five Toccatas & Fugues*, CD Sleeve Note.

universities expect their chapels to provide music of a standard which is a catalyst and an inspiration for undergraduate music elsewhere.

Thorpe Davie's contemporary at Glasgow University, Frederick Rimmer, ran his Chapel Choir on different lines. After a Durham BMus in 1939 and war service in the Middle East with the Lancashire Fusiliers where he rose to the rank of major, Rimmer had become organ scholar at Selwyn College, Cambridge. Things immediately changed for the better:

> Above all music flourished in the new era. F W Rimmer, later to be professor of music at the University of Glasgow, arrived in 1946 as the Organ Scholar (affiliated from Durham, where he had taken his first degree). He raised the Chapel choir to a level not hitherto attained....[75]

Rimmer apparently found the University Chapel Choir at a low ebb when he came to Glasgow in 1951 as Cramb Lecturer in Music but quickly 'revitalised the chapel services'[76] when he took over in 1954. Selwyn College's Royal Charter of 1882, to train young men 'in simple and religious habits according to the principles of the Church of England' may or may not have influenced Rimmer's attitude to the chapel, though 'his approach was very much that of the Anglican cathedral, modified by the more conservative members of the Senate'.[77] Rimmer certainly seems to have decided that large scale works were more suited to the University Choral Society which he built into a large choir (performing all Bach's major choral works and several modern works such as *Les Noces* (Stravinsky) and *Epitaph for this World and Time* (Iain Hamilton - a première), and that smaller ones (such as some anthems he composed himself) were more appropriate to the Chapel Choir.

Unlike St Salvator's and King's, a collegiate set-up on Oxford and Cambridge lines with the choir in the stalls at floor level was unequivocally intended by the architect of Glasgow University Chapel, John Bennet. The organ console is in a small gallery on the liturgical south of the building and only a very small group can sing from this position. Inevitably this has had an effect. Downstairs the choir is part of the congregation and also part of the ceremonial when it processes in with the chaplain

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[75] W. R. Brock and P. H. H. Cooper, *Selwyn College a History*, p218.
[76] 'Frederick W Rimmer, CBE MA BMus FRCO, Gardiner Professor of Music'. *The College Courant*, 1980, p 38.
[77] W. R. Erskine, *Letter*, 16 07 2001. Mr Erskine was Organ Scholar, Glasgow University 1961-64.

and university staff. That this was intended from the outset can be seen in the architect's painting of the chapel.

Nevertheless a choir's importance to a Scottish university service can still be felt to be too prominent and too "anglicised" if it is seated in the stalls. The St Salvator's Chapel Choir had to sing downstairs for the Sunday morning university services in Candlemas 2000 when the organ was being cleaned. The improvement in the congregational singing was often commented upon, but there was a decided lack of enthusiasm from many regular attenders (particularly those with long memories going back to Thorpe Davie days) for continuing the arrangement despite choral evensongs, the carol service and concerts always being sung from the stalls.

A minor but nevertheless valuable by-product of a "collegiate" musical set-up with the choir at floor level is the need to have student organists to accompany the services. Rimmer had organ scholars at Glasgow; Thorpe Davie never had the need of them at services and for concerts his organ accompanist was his long-standing colleague and friend, the distinguished pianist, Wight Henderson. In the last ten years of the present St Salvator's Chapel Choir there have been four organ scholars. None of these gave unambiguous promise of organ playing excellence when they arrived at the university (one in fact had never played the instrument) but the sheer pressure of regularly having to accompany anthems and complete choral evensongs brought their playing to a high pitch of excellence and the three who have left the university have continued their playing accompanying choirs in such august cathedral establishments as St Paul's, London, Chichester, Bristol, St Patrick's Dublin and so on. Glasgow University has produced a succession of outstanding organists from Rimmer's time to the present.

One of the most generous (and perceptive) assessments of Rimmer is by Thorpe Davie in *Scotland's Music* where he draws attention to his subject's achievements as Gardiner Professor at Glasgow University and, in particular, to his:

> ... persistence and enthusiasm for new thinking in music [which] stimulated the modern generation of Scottish composers (some of whom are his pupils) in several important ways. He was responsible for the installation of a very fine electronic workshop...He was the motivating force behind the McEwan Memorial Concerts... With Sir Alexander

> Gibson and the Scottish National Orchestra, he was responsible for what has come to be known as Musica Nova...[78]

Thorpe Davie's own frank and more muted self-assessment in *Scotland's Music* has already been noted.

Comparing the influence Thorpe Davie and Rimmer had on university chapel music is slightly invidious despite certain similarities in temperament and achievement. Both, needless to say, were consummate professional musicians and highly demanding teachers to whom the highest possible standards were the only acceptable ones.

Thereafter everything else about them was different. Rimmer was a professional Church of England orientated organist, the "aggressively Scottish Presbyterian" Thorpe Davie was not - in fact he was happy to admit that organ playing was not one of his specialities.[79] The environments in which they worked were in all important respects diametrically opposed. Glasgow was a large city university with a music department which had traditional ties with Scotland's only Conservatoire, the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, and had two professional symphony orchestras close to hand; St Andrews was a small provincial university where to run a music department demanded self-help and great adaptability. Robin Orr, Rimmer's predecessor as Gardiner Professor of Music, in fact publicly wondered if the St Andrews challenge was sustainable[80] - a view later and rather more bleakly seconded by the University Grants Committee whose ARTS Commitee invited the university to consider discontinuing degrees in Music.[81]

Thorpe Davie and Rimmer had come to moribund situations and had turned things triumphantly around. One could legitimately wonder whether or not they would have achieved such great personal success had their situations been reversed. But it has to be said that during Rimmer's twelve years as Chapel Organist he composed

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[78] C. Thorpe Davie, *Op. Cit.*, p51.

[79] He regularly prefaced his performances with the comment "as is well known I'm not an organist ...."

[80]

> It is important to a musician to have a symphony orchestra on hand, opera and chamber music, professional colleagues.... For opening the mind (and keeping it open) Glasgow (for example) would always be better than St Andrews...

R. Orr, *Musical Chairs*, p29.

[81] *St Andrews University Newsletter*, August 1981.

music for the choir[82], made well-received LPs of anthems and carols and in his retirement was enthusiastically reviewing new organ music for the *Organists' Review*. Although private recordings exist of Thorpe Davie's St Salvator's Chapel Choir there is a depressing negativity bordering on bitterness in all his comments on church music. Even Thorpe Davie's and Rimmer's church music seems to reflect their attitudes.

Thorpe Davie was, no doubt, the more distinguished composer, but his best-known piece of church music, *Come Holy Ghost, the Maker* (1937) which was recently included in the St Paul's Cathedral, London CD series 'The English Anthem' is strongly traditional in Stanford/Vaughan Williams vein. Possibly inevitably since it was written a quarter of a century later, Rimmer's *Sing we merrily* (1963) feels more contemporary and, dare one say it, fresher in approach. As might be expected both Thorpe Davie and Rimmer are extremely practical and inventive in their organ writing. *Come Holy Ghost* has a quasi-orchestral accompaniment with a magical middle section building up to a superb climax which is very rewarding to play on an organ with plenty of registration aids. Despite a duodecaphonic theme and some quite fierce dissonances the more obviously idiomatic organ accompaniment of *Sing we merrily* lies very comfortably under the fingers.

Come Holy Ghost came from a set of three anthems written by Thorpe Davie for the Scottish National Academy of Music Bach Cantata Choir. His two beautiful Christmas Carols *O earth, be hushed* and *Balow, my babe* had their genesis in incidental music for a 1946 nativity play by Robert Kemp called *When the star fell.* Originally composed for soprano and orchestra, they were published in SATB form in 1964. There seems neither anything specifically written for the St Salvator's Choir, nor does Thorpe Davie appear to have ever written an organ piece. Musically Rimmer during his time as University Organist seemed much more focussed on the services writing, as we have noted, not only anthems and carols for his choir but also preludes on Scottish psalm tunes. He may have been persuaded to compose the latter by his colleague Professor Robin Orr - their collections of *Preludes on Scottish Psalm Tunes* both appeared in 1960 in the Hinrichsen edition.

The St Salvator's and Glasgow University Chapel Choirs under Thorpe Davie and Rimmer must have inspired generations of university students and provided them with a vision of what was good and what was possible in choral music.

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[82] Rimmer contributed a hymn tune to *CH3 : Iona,* Hymn 576.

Nevertheless, as far as national church music is concerned, it is perhaps regrettable that in St Andrews this was through the medium of the chapel concert rather than through the chapel service. No eminent musician from the Thorpe Davie era in St Salvator's would be able to claim that:

> the discovery of the liturgical calendar with so many details I had been unaware of, was to enable me later to hold the position [of Organist and Choirmaster] at St Andrew's [RC] Cathedral, Glasgow.[83]

Despite the achievements of Thorpe Davie and Rimmer, the sad truth is that, unlike the Oxford and Cambridge Chapels in England, the influence the Scottish university chapels have exerted on the music of the national church has been minimal at best. They have certainly not been the centres of musical excellence which the Church of Scotland should have expected and may indeed have welcomed. In the early days of the revived chapels at Aberdeen and St Andrews the "secular authorities" were clearly nervous of any forms of innovation and this obviously had a negative effect on musical developments. Since then the blame - should there be any - for lack of excellence and commitment must be attributed to a general Scottish indifference to high-quality music in whatever genre.

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[83] W. R. Erskine, *Op. Cit.*

Chapter 4

The Theological Context: From richness, pathos and sublimity to the hearty.

Summary

Despite the attractions of the "hearty"and "morale boosting" after the cataclysmic intellectual and social changes of the mid-19th century the introduction to Scotland of a greater repertoire of congregational music led to concerns about insipient anarchy and heterodoxy.

In Scotland as late as 1917, and at the dawn of an inevitably different Post-War age, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was moved to:

> ... direct the [Psalmody and Hymns] Committee to take such prudent steps as may be open to them to secure the due employment of the metrical psalms as the authorised Manual of Praise of the Church of Scotland in the public worship in the sanctuary.[1]

That such a request could be made when the experience of both contemporary school and army pointed to the impact hymns were making at a time of unparallelled stress for the nation, suggests that attitudes, in some quarters at least, had not really progressed from pre-organ days. Perhaps distance had transformed the metrical psalm-singing era into an oasis of simple uncomplicated congregational worship led by choirs who had learnt the tunes to charming nonsense verses when, in reality, the potential music had for causing difficulties had been recognised in places like Paisley Abbey years before organs were introduced into the Scottish Presbyterian Churches.

> The Paisley Abbey Band dates its formation, by Dr Boag, in 1795 and may be considered, if not the first, among the very first introduced into the Kirk of Scotland. It was not till twenty years later that, by the excellent training and music composed for it by Mr R. A. Smith, it attained to such celebrity as to draw from all parts of Scotland the admirers of Sacred Music to listen to its fine flow of devotional harmony. But, unfortunately, the singing of the Band became gradually a matter of musical display,

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[1] *Reports of the General Assembly*, 1918, p669. This request (from an elder, Alexander Niven) seems especially reactionary when the Psalmody and Hymns Committee had carried out a survey of music in its Parishes just over ten years earlier and had claimed to find reassuring evidence for the continued use of the metrical psalms. See Chapter 7.

> and the congregational singing, if not discouraged, has been generally neglected, so that it is long since the Abbey Congregation, in great measure, have ceased to sing, resigning to the Band the whole privilege of praise.[2]

These observations, taken from the Preface to a *Congregational Psalmody* (1850) by a later Abbey precentor, another Andrew Thomson, were no doubt designed to emphasise the desirability and importance of acquiring 'the present collection of psalm tunes' as a means of rectifying the ills he had identified; Precentor Thomson had presumably embarked on the book at his own expense and a certain amount of discreet advertising is hardly surprising:

> The Editor feels that he would but ill discharge the duties of his office were he not to protest against so utter a neglect of an express ordinance of God, and to do his utmost endeavour to restore to the congregation that delightful and only part of the public worship in which they are privileged audibly to join. For this sole purpose he has, with the greatest care, selected, at his own risk, the present collection of Psalm Tunes for their use; many of which have been hallowed in the ears and hearts of Scotsmen for many generations, and sung by our Covenanting forefathers amid the deep glens and secluded moors of our Fatherland; as also the best for congregational use of the more modern compositions, carefully excluding all of a light trivial cast as ill suited to the solemnity of Divine Worship.

Too much should not be made of the "purple" prose - neither the Covenanting forefather's questionable vocal achievements nor the idyllic picture of rural Scotland would necessarily have resonated with the Paisley Abbey congregation, but it is interesting that Precentor Thomson goes on to quote - surely the similarities are too close to be chance - part of the Introduction to *The Edinburgh Sacred Harmony* noted above [my underlining]:

> By these means assisted by a well trained choir, and encouraged by the ministers and influential members of the congregation, which he respectfully solicits, the Editor is confident that by their combined efforts, a chorus will be produced which <u>in point of richness, pathos, and sublimity,</u> can never be be attained by any other means.[3]

'Hearty singing' was almost a mantra in later Scottish church music, so the use of these rather esoteric epithets is curious and surely significant.

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[2] A. R. Howell, *Paisley Abbey Its History, Architecture and Art*, p39.
[3] *Ibid.*, p40.

Clearly the Minister of St George's was the earlier to use the phrase, and, as an educated man we might expect him to have selected his words with some care. Despite the importance late 18th-century philosophers placed on the words "sublime" and "pathos",[4] one suspects that with both Thomsons they were not much more specific than the equally nebulous injunction to provide 'meaningful and relevant' education in the late 1970s UK secondary school. It may be wise therefore just to assume that as a musician the Revd. Thomson wanted the psalms to be sung "musically" - in tune, in time and without obtrusive voices and thought he was more likely to achieve his object if he employed a high-minded platitude or two. One wonders if Precentor Thomson had any idea at all how 'richness, pathos and sublimity' were to be interpreted in his psalter!

The Revd. Thomson was a committee man par excellence and had he lived longer he would doubtless have become Moderator of the General Assembly and a major figure at the Disruption. The *Scotsman* obituarist points out that the Revd. Thomson could have made a successful career in the Law or other profession, and there might just be a veiled hint or two that the writer thought it might have been better had he done so.[5] One imagines, to use the vernacular of a later age, the Revd. Thomson "ran a tight ship" and that every part of his congregational organisation operated to the highest standards of efficiency. Perhaps he was the first minister of the Church of Scotland to <u>demand</u> excellence in the music of his church - he would not have been at all happy to have in St George's any 'severe screaming quite beyond the natural pitch of the voice'[6] which Elizabeth Grant of Rothiemurchus reported could be found in some congregational singing elsewhere.

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> Astonishment as I have said , is the effect of the sublime in its highest degree: the inferior effects are admiration, reverence and respect.

E. Burke,*Philosophical Enquiry of the passion caused by the sublime,* quoted in P. Le Huray and J. Day, *Music and Aesthetics in the Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Centuries*, p71.

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> Nature intended him rather for the bar than the pulpit - though in any profession he must have risen to eminence; and when it is remembered that though not educated as a lawyer, he never scrupled to grapple with and frequently defeated the ablest of our fornale orators in their own field, we are justified in inferring that had circumstances originally directed his attention to that course of life, he would have rendered himself one of its greatest ornaments.

'Observer', *Scotsman,* 12 02 1831.

6 M. Patrick, *Op. Cit.*, p141.

The Revd. Thomson's rather reactionary churchmanship - in St George's he would not allow the repetition of the Lord's Prayer as he considered it 'so radically defective as not to acknowledge the necessity of dependence upon his [God's] atonement and righteousness'[7] - seems to rule out sympathy for liturgical music *per se*. One doubts he would have found much 'pathos' or 'sublimity' in the Anglican choral service, for example.[8] Indeed Thomson may well have adopted the pragmatic stance that since Edinburgh Corporation relied on him to pay off the magnificent building to which he had been appointed in 1814, anything that made his services more attractive to the congregation and especially to pew renters was worth doing. Despite his own musical interests, employing the outstanding precentor of the time, R. A. Smith (formerly of Paisley Abbey), to run the music of St George's was therefore no more than an obvious move for a gifted "organisation man" to make. The absence of the sort of criticisms levelled at the musical arrangements in Paisley, however, suggests that the Revd. Thomson not only supported Smith but that he managed matters in St George's with more delicacy.[9] Needless to say the probably more bourgeois St George's congregation may well have regarded the balance of choir and congregation participation in the hymns a very minor matter if the singing of the former was very good; in so doing possibly reflecting the town and country psalmody "divide" found in England:

> At present the point to be emphasised is that a highly fashionable church was setting the tone for a new kind of music, one in which the congregation, instead of praising God directly, would pay to have his praise sung by poor school children and played on an organ.[10]

Warm and generous obituary references to R. A. Smith in the Session minutes of St George's, Edinburgh say nothing about congregational singing, but do reveal an anxiety to maintain the high standard that the band had achieved under his precentorship:

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[7] J. Lamb, 'Aids to Public Worship in Scotland, 1800-1850' *Records of the Scottish Church History Society, Vol 13*, p180.

[8] In 1817 the Revd.Thomson provoked comment about his reluctance to hold a memorial service for Princess Charlotte (the heir to the throne) who died in childbirth. One commentator suggested that this was because Thomson did not like the Episcopal Burial Service. Information from *Scottish Tracts* - a volume of 25 pamphlets in Special Collections University of St Andrews.

[9] The *Caledonian Mercury* and the *Scotsman* speak of Thomson's 'tact' and 'unaffected good temper'.

[10] N. Temperley, *Op. Cit.*, p116.

> It having been further represented to the session that the Band would be in danger of falling of both in number and proficiency unless a proper person were speedily obtained to take management of it, and they being fully satisfied of the qualification of Mr A. Murray, Frederick Street, Edinburgh whose high musical attainments are universally known and whose conduct they have every reason to believe is every way correct and becoming.[11]

A concert programme from 1824 in St George's gives an idea of the choir's repertoire which the Session was anxious to maintain. There may have been some congregational participation - words are given in full - but one suspects in the interests of 'richness, pathos and sublimity' that it would not have been all that welcome, even allowing that the audience knew the tunes. It is difficult to believe the Handel, Kent and Jomelli pieces in this concert could have been given without some form of accompaniment:

Concert of Sacred Music

St George's Church, March 10, 1825

Psalm Tune:	Sion - Rev Mr Mason
Anthem	R. A. Smith
Give ear to my words, O Lord	
Psalm Tune and Sanctus	Rev A. Thomson
Praise Jehovah in his dwelling	
Holy, holy, holy	
Hymn for the blind	S.Webbe Jun
Hark , sister, hark that bursting sign	
Anthem	Farrant
Lord for thy tender mercies sake	
Psalm Tune	Invocation - R. A.Smith
O send thy light forth	
Duet and Grand Chorus	Kent
I will mention, the Lord's kindness	
Psalm Tune	Supremacy - Mrs Gibson
The Lord is King	

[11] St George's Edinburgh, *Minutes*, 11 01 1829.

Funeral Hymn	R. A. Smith
That mortal frame dissolv'd	
Psalm Tune	Omnipotence - J. Thomson
Clothed with majesty sublime	
Doxology	J. Thomson
Glory and Praise	
Hymn	Russian Air
Say, who shall friendship strive for thee	
Sanctus	Jomelli
Gloria in Excelsis	Rev C. McGregor
Glory to God	
Psalm Tune	St Asaph
Amidst the mighty	
Detigen (sic) Te Deum	Handel
O Lord in thee have I trusted[12]	

The number of items by Smith, Thomson and the latter's 20 year old son, John, will be noted. Had the Revd. Thomson lived longer, his work in St George's might have had wider influence, but soon after his early death in 1831 (equally tragically for Scottish music, John, later Professor of Music at Edinburgh University, was to die even younger at the age of 36) the Church everywhere was presented with a series of challenges on a scale that it had never faced before. Internal stresses like the Oxford Movement, the Disruption and the publication of *Essays and Reviews* in 1860 were accompanied by external challenges like Darwinism and the pace of scientific advance.

Music was a minor matter to those first involved in the Oxford Movement and the Disruption. To most Reformed churches in the early 19th century the 'rational, reformatory zeal of the Enlightenment' was incompatible with the cultivation of complex music either for choir or congregation. Sacred music's purpose was to create a devotional mood through a 'noble simplicity'[13] which could be understood by all. It can be confidently assumed that leading figures in the Church of Scotland (if not the Revd. Thomson - judging by the above programme with its Jomelli and Handel) would be comfortable with such a view, but it was one that was also shared by the the 'high church' Camden, later Ecclesiologist,[14] and Oxford Movements. In

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12 Information in *ScottishTracts*
13 F. Blume, *Protestant Church Music*, p324.
14 - also sometimes known as the 'Cambridge Movement'.

other words the Church of Scotland was not "out on a limb" in being cautious about musical encroachments.

While the Oxford Movement never addressed church music directly it probably supported the Ecclesiologists' espousal of plainsong as the ideal church music medium because of its 'noble simplicity'. It might still be doubted that plainsong was really a matter of any great moment[15] to either. Certainly plainsong was not always admired by Oxford clergy:

> Oxford [in the 1850s] had become musical. Healthy development is apt to throw down morbid outgrowths, manifested here in a spurious but short-lived influx of the so-called "Gregorian" music, a reversion to the modes prevalent in Christian worship before the discovery of counterpoint. The freak was ecclesiological, not musical.[16]

The lack of urgency with which the Ecclesiologists got round to considering church music in the first place - it took nearly ten years after they had sorted out the architectural, ornamental and ceremonial aspects of church building and only then with an "external consultant", William Dyce, to lead their deliberations - suggests a low priority for music.

If progressive elements in the "musical" Church of England were slightly equivocal about music it is hardly surprising that before the Disruption the leadership of the "unmusical" Church of Scotland should also be generally indifferent. Indeed worship was conceived by most Scottish ministers as a demanding intellectual experience during which music was not especially appropriate even in the "preliminaries" (the psalms and prayers).

The desire to improve and liberalise music in the Church of Scotland might be partially attributed to the 19th century's more progressive theological attitudes:

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[15] John Newman's seemingly lukewarm interest in William Dyce's edition of *The Order of Daily Service* may be due to an anxiety not to alienate the Provost of Oriel College, Edward Hawkins. Hawkins 'disliked religious enthusiasm and was suspicious of ritualism and rationalism' [M. A. Crowther, *Church embattled: Religious controversy in Mid-Victorian England*, p24] and may have been the source of delay in Dyce's gaining access to the College's copy of the the *Order* but Newman's perfunctory answers to enquiries (when he bothered to respond) and rather patronising references to 'Mr Dyce' in his letters to Pusey do not reflect much interest in, or commitment to, "correct" church music.

[16] W. Tuckwell, *Op. Cit.*, p76.

> The move away from Calvinist orthodoxy was seen particularly in the impact made by the American evangelists Moody and Sankey in 1874 and in the welcome given to *Sacred Songs and Solos.* Their campaign marked a change from the intellectual approach based upon the doctrinal orthodoxy of the Westminster standards to a more emotional approach based upon evangelical experience.[17]

But it could also be argued that the main reason was psychological.

When a group feels under attack the first reactions are to man the defences and keep up morale. The Scottish church felt itself under attack in the post-Disruption years both from internal strife and from scientific discoveries which seemed to contradict the absolute authority of the Bible. A sloppily-run church with low quality buildings and boring interminable services was an inadequate defence against crisp scientific arguments, and was a poor advertisement for attracting new members - or keeping current ones.

Whatever else may be said about the schism, the congregations of the post-Disruption Churches did take much greater pride in their buildings and the orderliness[18] of their services than they had done previously. Not only was the motivation competition with local rivals[19] but there must also have been a desire that the church should show a brave and confident face to a rapidly changing intellectual world where even churchmen in *Essays and Reviews* could express disturbingly radical viewpoints. Handsome new churches or magnificently restored old ones - and dynamic music - were a clear statement of confidence in both denomination and in Christianity itself.

Music has an almost unique ability to express solidarity. From national anthems to football songs, music is used to demonstrate or bolster the morale of groups and individuals. Perhaps it was inevitable that the first groups to make extensive use of hymns in England were "disenfranchised" ones like the Methodists and the Independent Baptists. Similarly the Anglo-Catholic wing of the Church of England,

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[17] D. Murray, 'Disruption to Union', *Studies in the History of Worship in Scotland*, p99.

[18] As witnessed by the creation of the *Church Service Society* in 1865 for example.

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> And now came a strange burst of musical enthusiasm - or was it merely a wave of inter-congregational jealousy? Within the space of three years four new Pipe Organs were praising the Lord in King Street U.P., Free St Andrew's, Portland Road U.P. and the Free High Churches respectively.

Free St Andrew's, [Kilmarnock] p76.

regarded by many church people and others with extreme distaste,[20] was the first group to introduce Viennese Masses to its services. Music in all these churches was surely at least partly employed as a "bonding agent" to maintain resolve in sometimes hostile environments. Later commentators definitely considered Victorian hymns fulfilled this role [my underlinings]:

> They form a fitting and most welcome expression for every kind of deep religious feeling; they are with us to speak of Faith and Hope in hours of trial and sorrow; with use to animate all earnest Christian effort; with us as the rich consolation of individual hearts, and as one common bond of fellowship between the living members of Christ's mystical body.[21]

Post-Disruption, Post-Darwin and Post- *Essays and Reviews*, the musical priority for the Scottish churches was not going to be 'richness, pathos and sublimity' but "team spirit" - the more heartily expressed the better.

Dr Hely Hutchison Almond (1832-1903) can be taken as a spokesman for the new dispensation. As Headmaster and owner of Loretto School he had the opportunity and the authority to carry out his theories. Almond's recipe for congregational singing in an age of doubt and questioning inevitably was going to be very different from the Revd. Thomson's in his more "secure" intellectual environment: no quiet chorus effects from the congregation supporting an expert choir but a vigorous congregational choir. Almond was not the first churchman to propose this[22] though he may well have been the most successful - the singing in his school chapel was reputedly very good:

> It had always been the custom to have a short Choral Service in the school Hall on Sunday evenings. Mr Heathcote [a highly respected musician, later precentor of New Greyfriars, Edinburgh] of St Mary's Choir came over from Dalkeith in time for a long practice before prayers. Every boy was supposed to sing, though some of them had very little idea of how to do it, and every boy was also taught the rudiments of the grammar

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[20] *Punch* regularly satirised the Anglo-Catholics.
[21] Forward to *Lyra Anglica*, quoted in I. Bradley, *Op. Cit.*, p52
[22] For example:

> An old friend who is an experienced hand in matters relating to Church Music, strongly recommends knots of trained singers to be dispersed over the church as we described in our last number but one.

The Parish Choir, July 1847, p180.

> of music. The service included psalms, an anthem and a hymn, and whatever else the singing may have lacked, it never lacked vigour. The school thoroughly enjoyed it, and so, when the new chapel was opened there was no difficulty in having a full choral service.[23]

This portrait of ideal congregational singing has to be qualified of course - 'alternative employment' had to be found for the musically challenged - but 'under normal circumstances three-quarters of the school used to be in the choir'.[24]

Vigorous congregational singing was a very two-edged sword, however: fine if the hymns reflected acceptable sentiments and theology, but a source of major concern if they did not. There was in fact a straightforward nervousness at the prospect of control slipping out of the hands of the church authorities if hymn-singing was allowed too much scope. In the words of Almond:

> As to hymns, a collection of not more than fifty or sixty of the really great hymns of all ages is all that is needed to supplement the old Psalter and Paraphrases, the use of which should always, in my judgement, remain predominant in Scotland. To conclude the clergyman must be master in his own church. Organists and choirs must be made to understand their function is subordinate and that the chief test of their success is the strength and fervour which they are able to infuse directly or indirectly into the singing of the congregation. [25]

Almond may just be expressing his suspicions of the degenerative effect of certain types of high Victorian music which were shared by other educationists. Inspector Dr David Middleton's 1877 *Report on the Lower Ward of Lanarkshire* shows a similar distaste for the evanescent and trivial:

> With regard to the kind of songs presented to us, I should like to see an improvement. The future tastes of scholars would be consulted [sic] by discarding the 'wishy-washy' and adhering more to the National. The latter will be appreciated when the former are forgotten. A boy of ten can relish 'A man's a man for a' that' - and so can a man of 60. Ask a class to choose between 'A hundred pipers' and 'Gaily the troubadour' and their

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[23] H. B. Tristram, *Loretto School,* p134.
[24] *Ibid.*
[25] H. H. Almond, 'Church Music and Choirs', *The Divine Life of the Church, Second Series,Vol II,* p212. See Appendix page 259.

> preference is instantly apparent.[26]

Nevertheless both Almond and Middleton are much more likely to be reflecting the nervousness of both 19th-century church and school at any signs of divergent thinking among their charges. In the church, hymns of too personal a nature, those suggestive of universal atonement[27] (the deposition of John McLeod Campbell (1800-1872) by the General Assembly in 1831 was still a sensitive issue in the latter part of the 19th century), and other unsympathetic theological positions were unlikely to be welcomed by clergy anxious to maintain the "orthodoxy" of their congregation's "doctrinal stance".[28] The 19th-century Church can hardly be censured for attempting to curb free-wheeling elements within it when toeing the current educational line is still a *sine qua non* both for the ambitious and for those looking for a quiet life among today's school teaching staffs.[29] It is therefore easy to see the attractions of small non-contentious repertoires for both the 19th-century church and school.

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[26] I. Macdougall, *Op.Cit.*, p 149.
One could almost guarantee that Victorian school children preferred *Gaily the Troubadour* but possibly their sensitivity to the wishes of their elders and betters led them to make the tactful choice in Middleton's presence. It is not without the bounds of possibility, of course, that the Inspector had no evidence whatever to support his assertion.

[27] The Rev James Begg, who was to become one of the most virulent critics of the organ seems to have been undecided even in his own mind about universal atonement, let alone be keen to sing about it:

> If we do not mistake, the preacher, by these two statements, merely brought out the old difference between the efficiency and sufficiency of the atonement. If our preacher believes in the infinite value of the sacrifice of Christ, he surely did not mean to say that the salvation of a part of the human family so exhausted it that there remained no merit for others. If he meant to say that though the atonement was of infinite value yet many would derive no benefit from it, he merely announced a fact which all believe. We think our preacher, in order to maintain the sovereignity of God, barely avoided the charge of inconsistency.

J. Smith, 'Rev James Begg', *Our Scottish Clergy*, p131.

[28] The Broad Church's "quasi-Unitarianism", for example, led to concerns in 1888 that "party" doctrinal issues were becoming too prominent in the Church Service Society's suggested *Orders of Service*. J. Kerr, *The Renascence of Church Worship*, p96.
Needless to say many hymns do reflect "party" standpoints.

[29] Attention could be drawn to mixed ability classes which were forced on schools in the 1970s only for the teachers to be blamed for this "serious error of judgement" in the 1990s.

Chapter 5

Confusion and Disillusion.
The Introduction of the Organ into Episcopal Church, Presbyterian Church and Private Chapel.

Summary

Against a background of national indifference to music it is hardly surprising that some of the problems the Presbyterian churches found in adopting the organ to accompany congregational singing had been earlier experienced by the Episcopal Church. Confusion and doubts about what was wanted and what was possible - often accompanied by a suspicion that congregations were not getting value for money from their organists - seems to have been prevalent in all the Scottish churches. Organists were not always seen as skilled musicians but as obtuse tradesmen who had to be closely supervised. In the early days of church organs in both Episcopal and Presbyterian churches, therefore, cordial relations between organists and their employers seem to have been rare. Far from establishing the conditions for developing musical excellence, illwill and mutual suspicion flourished. The aristocratic private chapels do not appear to have avoided the difficulties faced by the Scottish churches.

Episcopal Churches

Until the 19th century most Scottish Episcopal Services were little different - even in some use of extempore prayers - from those of the Church of Scotland; particularly so in music matters where precentor-led metrical psalmody was common to both traditions. With the more frequent adoption of the organ to lead congregational singing, problems started arising - many of which were to be repeated almost exactly by the Church of Scotland and the Free Church - though apparently not so much so by the United Presbyterians, half a century or so later.

The complaints about music in the Episcopal Churches seem to have centred on their organists' and choirs' shortcomings in leading congregational music in general and, one suspects, chanting in particular.

Chanting the psalms and canticles had become very important to the Episcopal Church by the early 19th century:

> A belief that the ancient method of chanting involved the congregation was one of the prevalent ideas in the renewed emphasis on liturgy in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The important reason for using prose translations of the psalms from the original Hebrew was the conception of such texts being closer to the practice of the primitive church, and to the true meaning of the Bible Psalms, than metrical versions.[1]

Really practical chanting systems for Parish Church use, despite examples of 'Method of Chanting' in collections such as *The Scottish Episcopal Church Music Book* [Edinburgh, undated] by J T Surenne [1816-1878] had to wait until the end of the 19th century and possibly even until the 1940s with Sidney Nicholson's *The Parish Psalter*. In the early 19th century chanting in the English Cathedrals was a hit or miss affair, with the choristers and lay clerks often left to make their own way to the barlines in interpreting the 'rule of 3 and 5'[2] - bad enough in a small cathedral choir but a possibly very potent source of friction in a large parish church congregation:

> To perform this Kind of Singing well, is of great Art, which being accompanied with an organ, no Part of the Service is more grand... by observing the Reading-Tone and Cadence, especially if the Organist is a good Hand, and has good regard to the Length of every Verse, who may use Forte, or Piano at Pleasure: and perform all Verses of Importance, and Doxologies with a Full Organ &.c[3]

The potential for confusion where the Organist was encouraged to play 'Forte at Pleasure' (not to mention 'Full organ') and where the hope that he has 'good Regard to the Length of every Verse' might not always have been realised, is obvious. Not surprisingly complaints about complexity surfaced in one of the first Scottish Episcopal Churches to have an organ, St Andrew's, Glasgow,[4] where:

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[1] R. M. Wilson, *Anglican Chant and Chanting in England, Scotland, and America 1660-1820*, p187.

[2]
> The perfect chant has four tones contained in three *alla breve* bars to the mediato or breathing place or double bar. The first of these tones is the reciting note, which serves all verses, long or short, to the third word or syllable before the middle of such verse. it has six more tones in four bars from the mediato to the end; the first of these is also the reciting note, which like the other is kept until the fifth word or syllable from the conclusion.

John Beckwith, *The first verse of Every Psalm of David*,(London 1808), quoted in *Ibid.*, p94.

[3] John Marsh, 'Preface', *New Chants*, quoted in *Ibid.*, p189.

[4] St Andrew's was well known for the excellence of its music.

> ... many of the pieces of Music introduced lately into the chapel did not meet with the approbation of a great part of the congregation being too complicate[d] for the greater part of the Hearers ..... and which the Congregation in general cannot so easyly join in.[5]

When early 19th-century commentators speak of Hymns and Anthems they appear to be referring to Chanted Canticles and Hymns[6] so it seems reasonable to assume that the complaints were about the psalms and possibly hymns, rather than anthems in the modern sense.

St John's Episcopal Church, Edinburgh provides a surely classic case of what happens when money is invested in a music programme without any clear idea of practicalities or what it is hoped to achieve. The St John's Minutes possibly endorse White's assertion that the music there caused as much trouble 'as any other ten churches in Scotland',[7] though tensions and ill will were probably found elsewhere.[8] As early as August 1826 (the church was built in 1818) the vestry 'took into consideration the state of the choir of the chapel and that it is not so efficient as could be wished for the expense laid out upon it'. What the particular reasons for the dissatisfaction at St John's were and what the vestry members meant by a 'new arrangement of the choir' (position? - the choir sang from the less than ideal acoustic of the rear gallery - or its actual composition) are not identified. Perhaps the Vestry was unsure in its own mind! The "rules" later given to the organist, David Hamilton, noted below strongly suggests that most members of the Vestry issuing them did not understand what was being demanded and it is reasonable to assume they were not much wiser a decade or so earlier.

Unlike today, where there are "easily accessed" examples of excellence in all styles of Anglican music from "traditional" to "black gospel", in the early 19th century there could have been none to which the leaders and members of a congregation could refer. English Cathedral and College Chapel standards were usually deplorable, the Scottish choral movement led by Mainzer was not to materialise until the 1840s and few Scots could have heard the fine choirs of St Mark's College, Chelsea, and the

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[5] R. M. Wilson, *Op. Cit.*, p201.
[6] There are no anthems in the modern sense in Surenne's *Hymns and Anthems*, for example.
[7] G. White, *The Scottish Episcopal Church: a New History*, p35.
[8] For example:

> Music was another source of discord. ..Mr Skinner [the parson] tried to introduce it [Ancient &Modern] soon after its publication as a means of replacing, or supplementing, the metrical psalms. The vestry objected vigorously and the project had to be abandoned.

J. Thomson, *St Andrew's St Andrews: an episcopal congregation*, p45.

Chapel Royal which were run in tandem[9] by Thomas Helmore - despite the occasional appreciative report from a Scottish commentator:

> When I visited [St Mark's] a few years ago ... on Sunday the service was entirely vocal and more complete and beautiful harmony I have never heard. About 40 basses and tenors and 40 children singing treble ... [performing] services and anthems of Tallis, Boyce and others without any assistance of any instrument but a fork to strike the note.[10]

Dissatisfaction was therefore probably just a feeling that things were not quite right and that the music should be better, even if pin-pointing actual inadequacies and shortcomings was difficult. The seemingly widespread reliance on single voices to lead the singing, however, whether that of a precentor or a choir member, was bound to sound unsatisfactory even to those who did not completely share the Rev Andrew Thomson's wish for 'richness and sublimity'.

In St John's, Edinburgh and St George's, Edinburgh, Precentors seem to have led the singing despite the presence of an organ and choir.[11] A note reporting the discontinuance of the Precentor's office at St George's certainly reinforces this interpretation:

> Mr Stewart thereafter stated that since the office of a precentor had been dispensed with Mr Shannon [the Rector] was anxious that the number of singers should be increased and he had requested that the additional singers should be procured.
>
> The meeting gave orders to engage two singers at as moderate salaries as possible.[12]

However disagreeable to modern tastes a voice "o'er topping the rest" is in choral singing, the obvious reliance on single voices in the early 19th century is illustrated by the tensions generated by the St John's acquisition of St George's star chorister, Mrs Collins.

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> Mr Walker added that 'there being no regular daily service at St James's, it was an advantage to the boys to be taken to St Mark's, the precentorship of which Mr Helmore still retained'.

Memoir of the Rev Thomas Helmore quoted in D. Baldwin, *Op. Cit.*, p310.

10 No attribution, *Report of the Association for the Revival of Sacred Music in Scotland*, 1851.

11 Another remit of the Vestry's enquiry into the state of the music was 'whether the services of Mr Hodge, the present Precentor should not be dispensed with'. *St John's Episcopal Chapel Minutes*, 02 08 1826.

In May 1827 the assistant minister at St John's, Mr (later Dean) Ramsay, reported to the Vestry that:

> ... with regard to the treble singers no great improvement could be made but that if a good treble could be procured a great improvement might be made.[13]

Ramsay then, presumably without waiting to ascertain whether his diagnosis was widely accepted, announced that he had in fact found such a treble and that Mrs Collins, then in the Choir of St George's Episcopal Chapel, Edinburgh, was willing to 'engage in the Choir of St John's for £8.8s[14] a year and would undertake to instruct the other treble singers'. Unlike so many other informal and arbitrary appointments this seems to have been a good one and later, with Mr Rogers, the Organist and Choirmaster[15] at the helm, the choir entered a golden, if brief, age from 1829 to 1832. Not that the St George's Vestry were happy at losing Mrs Collins. In fact the St George's Minutes record that the minister and vestry were very angry indeed and regretted 'that the vestry of the chapel above alluded to [St John's] should have entered into the transaction'.[16] Mrs Collins was obviously a very competent musician to be able to help with the training of the children, but she must also have been, a "host unto herself" in leading the congregational praise.[17] In 1831 she was supported by three men and 4/5 boys and 2 girls - a grouping which, if well trained, could give a good account of itself, particularly in the simpler repertoire of the English Cathedral Service - if that is what they sang. Unless it considerably "punched above its weight", however, the choir could not have provided much "richness and sublimity".

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[12] *St George's Episcopal Chapel Minutes,* 15 06 1825.

[13] *St John's Minutes,* 31 05 1827.

[14] The St George'sVestry were willing to pay her the same as St John's should she stay.

[15] The *St John's Minutes* are clear about the dual appointment. Before then it is is possible the Precentor ran the choir as well as leading the singing. This certainly happened at St Andrew's Episcopal Church, Glasgow.

[16] Dean Ramsay's charm must have been very persuasive. Not only did Ramsay entice away a member of the church where he been curate, but W. E. Gladstone was later to accuse him of 'lack of faith' [over the Scottish Communion Service] apparently without lasting damage to his relationships with the offended parties.
D. C. Lathbury, *Letters on church and religion of William Ewart Gladstone, Vol II,* p439.

[17] Ramsay's recommendation that 'two of the present treble singers might be dispensed with' if Mrs Collins came might suggests she had a very powerful voice *St Johns Minutes,* 02 08 1826.

When the organist and distinguished organ builder[18], David Hamilton, took over in 1833, the choir seems to have lost its boys[19] and the choir's complement was down to Mrs Collins, 3 men singers and 5 girls.

To remedy this unsatisfactory state of affairs - perhaps some no longer found Mrs Collins' vocal dominance pleasing - the Minutes for 17th April 1838 reported plans for a Choir School for ten boys[20]. These fell through, but Hamilton, probably off his own bat (there is no reference to his plans in the St John's Minutes), was later to revive the idea of a boys' choir when he advertised for one in the *Scotsman* on 6th October 1847. Nothing appears to have materialised from this initiative either. The advertisement appeared after Hamilton had built the organ for St Mary's, Dalkeith and may well have been inspired by hearing the Duke's Choir there:

> WANTED to join the CLASS for SINGING, in connection with the choir of St John's FIFTEEN YOUNG BOYS from 9 to 12 years old. To Parents who wish their Sons to receive a sound Musical Education in their youth, the above is an opportunity seldom to be met with, as the Boys[21] are all taught by a first-rate Master, free of any charge

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[18] See Appendix page 260.

[19] The morale of a choir can often be gauged by how well it retains its singers. After a bad patch at St Andrews Episcopal Church, Glasgow, Precentor Robert Cock was paid an extra £5 for:

> ... bringing to the chapel a new sett of Singers to officiate in place of the Boys who had mostly left the Chapel.

R. M. Wilson, *Op .Cit.*, p201.

[20]

> The next year 1838, was noteworthy because of the scheme which Mr Ramsay laid before the Vestry for the foundation of "a singing academy" in which provision was made to improve the musical services of the church. Unfortunately it was not received with any enthusiasm.

W. Perry, *Memorials of the Church of St John the Evangelist, Edinburgh*, p37.

[21] There has always been a feeling - not entirely dead today - that a boys' choir is inherently superior to a mixed-sex children's one musically; *inter alia* the sound is "purer" and more "powerful". Possibly this was the main reason for the 1838 decision to consider creating a choir school for St John's, Edinburgh; nevertheless even at this early date boys' choirs in Anglican parish churches were beginning to have very pronounced churchmanship nuances which were not true of the cathedrals.

Both Cambridge and Oxford Movement churches favoured all-male choirs and would have nothing else in the chancel, but a boys' choir (with or without men) is particularly associated with the latter despite the absence of any great Tractarian concerns about the repertoire they were going to sing. In the shrines of Tractarianism (later Anglo-Catholicism), from Newman's Littlemore to All Saints' Margaret Street, London, St Barnabas', Pimlico (London) and St Michael's, Tenbury Wells, a boys' choir could be taken for granted:

> It is well to remember that the Tractarians regarded them essential to the well being of any great parish, next in importance to the College of Clergy.

> whatever. Those wishing to join will please apply without delay to MR HAMILTON, Organist, 116 George Street.[22]

The subsequent history of St John's could be thought to show possibly the most damaging result of poor leadership and an absence of models of excellence to follow - the speed with which the ill-conceived and doctrinaire rush in to fill the vacuum. Apart from the disappointment over the collapse of the two choir school proposals, Hamilton had to contend with a St John's Vestry which seems to have been as demanding as it was inexpert. He was a competent composer who should have been perfectly able to make informed choices about material for his congregation and choir to sing, yet a list of rules, prepared by 'one of their number of which, so far as they can judge, they approve' was given to him by the Vestry in 1840. These are offensive and peremptory - 'a selection of chants will shortly be sent to the organist to be copied [the next word is indecipherable - taught?] and introduced gradually' - is typical. He was also told that his playing was too 'loud and harsh' for so 'small a choir'. The probability that the author of these rules was not on hand to either

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D. Morse Boycott, *They shine like stars*, p321.

Despite his important role in the founding of Glenalmond and his awareness of 'the high churchman making gains around him', Ramsay was not a "natural" high church man but he 'quietly adjusted himself and his congregation to moderate high church ways', G.White, *Op. Cit.*, p36. Perhaps the high church nuances of a boys' choir were a major sticking point for the St John's authorities though their decision not to proceed was later regretted.

Unlike the English Cathedral style all-male musical establishment at St Mary's Dalkeith, many Episcopal boys' choirs in 19th-century Scottish Episcopal Churches did have very pronounced Tractarian/Anglo Catholic overtones. The Earl of Glasgow's two foundations at St Ninian's Cathedral, Perth and the Church and College of the Holy Spirit [now Cathedral] at Cumbrae, both of which had boys' choirs, were such. The Cumbrae Choir lasted from 1850-1885 with the choir of 6 to 8 resident boy choristers singing Matins and Evensong daily. St Ninian's Cathedral had an all-male choir well into the 1960s though the professional element had long since disappeared by then.

Trinity College, Glenalmond was in some respects a larger version of Cumbrae, being part school and part seminary. The seminary elements of both colleges were equally unsuccessful as it happens. The Glenalmond chapel routine, however , was modelled on Winchester not on the precepts of either the Cambridge or Oxford Movements. The first Warden, Bishop Wordsworth, was a member of the Cambridge Camden Society (C. Webster and J. Elliott, *A church as it should be*, p451), but was not a Tractarian - despite accusations from various sources which he rigorously denied. Surplices were worn at services by the boys, however. He explained that he had introduced them:

> ... mainly because they formed one of the links which bound us to Winchester, and gave us the semblance of an old foundation.

Annals, p49 quoted in F. C. St. Quinton, *The History of Glenalmond*, p27.

[22] *Scotsman*, 06 10 1847, quoted in Ian Macdougall, *Op. Cit.*, p78.

explain or promote his arguments and his musical selections suggests that he may have been William Dyce,[23] who had recently [1839] moved to London. Requests in the rules to use the swell 'without reeds' [stops of the trumpet class] and the dulciana [a very quiet stop] and to avoid 'heavy compound pedal basses' when playing the organ might be thought to add weight to this suspicion. 'Heavy compound pedal basses', in particular, is an expression which one suspects neither non-organists nor professional organists would use in the early 19th century. Dyce was an apparently able amateur organist,[24] but one who was hardly likely to have any competence on the pedals[25] - indeed St John's was one of the few organs in the UK to have had them at that time. Sour grapes might be reasonably inferred! The "rules" - which share the hectoring tone of his *Christian Remembrancer* articles - may well represent a transitional stage in Dyce's musical development before research led him to demand an exclusively plainsong based 'musical service'. Possibly the Dyce single chant included in this study was part of the selection wished on Hamilton![26] Nevertheless from whatever source the "rules" came, their usefulness would have been greatly enhanced had the author been able to point to good practice elsewhere - and expressed himself more sensitively.

The congregation seemed happy enough to indulge Hamilton's organ requirements in St John's (he considerably enlarged the instrument) and the fact he stayed thirty years (1833-1863) suggests that relationships were not quite as brittle as the minutes might suggest. It is tempting to see Hamilton as a pawn in high/low church politics - "refined liturgical" [the burden of the "rules"] - versus "hearty congregational" music but the truth might be that Hamilton was not a particularly good organist and choirmaster. If he was unable to lead choir and congregation convincingly through such tricky areas as chanted psalms his vulnerability to advice and direction from self-appointed experts was obviously greater than that of his successful predecessor, Mr Roger.

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[23] Dyce's membership of St John's is suggested by his friendship with his eventual brother in law Robert Dundas Cay - a sometime member of the vestry as later was his son (?),W Dyce Cay , and his residences which were all within a reasonable distance of the church - 8 India Street, 128 George Street and 43 Moray Place. (Royal Scottish Academy Records).

[24] He was noted for his facility in improvisation.

[25] The St John's organ reflected Hamilton's German organ building training and sympathies. Like his brother Adam who had 'spent four years as a pupil of Scheider' in Germany and as a music seller who might well have stocked the 'readily available German organ tutors' (N Thistlethwaite, *The Victorian Organ*, p178), it can be assumed that Hamilton had at least some expertise on the pedals.

[26] It came from Glenalmond College with which both Ramsay and Dyce had connections. See page 289.

Presbyterian Churches

The similarity of the problems faced by the various Scottish Churches over the introduction of organs is striking, and possibly confirms a nation-wide suspicion of organs and professional musicians rather than a purely Presbyterian one. The success the Episcopal Church was enjoying in the early part of the 19th century in attracting Presbyterians to its ranks, therefore, must have been due to its standard liturgical services and short sermons, not the quality of its music which, as the experiences noted above of St John's - a wealthy and socially distinguished establishment[27] - revealed was not necessarily very expert.

The trials and tribulations of North Leith Parish Church, Edinburgh over its new organ certainly mirror those of St John's. Both congregations were led by officials without a clear vision of what they wished to achieve musically, but with strong suspicions that they were not getting their money's worth. There is also a similar nastiness in the treatment of their organists.

At least some of North Leith's unhappy experiences must have been repeated fairly frequently over Scotland. An increasing number of quite large instruments (the North Leith Wadsworth seems to have been a three manual of about 29 stops) and a smallish pool of inexperienced players were guaranteed to create disillusionment among many congregations after virtuoso players like Albert Peace or Albert Hollins had opened their organs. Those who had bitterly opposed the introduction of an organ in the first place would have found halting performances of the *Old Hundredth* on the Sunday following an opening recital particularly galling.

Unusually for Church of Scotland Minutes, those of North Leith Parish Church give a detailed account of the installation of an organ and its ramifications. This chronicle of the Session's relationship with the church's organists provides a possibly unique insight into the far reaching effects on congregational unity when a seemingly minor change in the accompaniment of the hymns was introduced (the downgrading of traditional metrical psalmody surely was a much more radical departure than organ accompaniments). It might be objected that the large "blue collar" element in the North Leith congregation was at least partly responsible for the polarisation of views, but similar, if more amicably expressed and resolved

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[27] W. E. Gladstone always attended services at St John's when in Edinburgh - possibly that is where he first met William Dyce.

antagonisms, could be found in such "West end" congregations as St George's Free, Edinburgh.[28]

At first moves to introduce an organ into North Leith seemed destined to work out harmoniously:

> ... there was read letter of 11th June 1878, from Mr Thomas Durie, SSC, Leith on behalf of certain members of North Leith Congregation desirous that an organ should be introduced to North Leith Church requesting the consent, support and influence of the Kirk Session, with a view of obtaining afterwards that of the congregation. The Kirk Session considered carefully the import of Mr Durie's letter and agreed to delay the subject for matured consideration to a meeting of Session to be held in the Session House on the evening of Monday the 15th current at 8 o'clock.[29]

By the meeting on July 15th the Session felt sufficiently confident to issue instructions to the 'Moderator to proceed to ascertain the feeling of the congregation by making intimation from the pulpit and asking those who object to the organ to signify the same in writing'. A more even-handed approach would have been to solicit written comments from all interested parties - for and against - rather than making the objectors feel they were being "targeted". Apart from anything else, some enthusiastic pro-organ endorsements[30] to which the Session could refer might well have defused some of the objectors' wrath and dissuaded them from suspecting some Machiavellian plot.

The rumblings of dissent must have continued, but the Moderator having failed 'in getting the objectors to agree to six members to meet the Kirk Session as had been proposed at a meeting held in the church on the evening of 18th November',[31] the Session must have determined that enough of the congregation were favourably disposed towards the project that cautious first steps could be made towards procuring an instrument. Again the Session might be accused of naivety at best - what action group would voluntarily send a small deputation to take on a large committee?

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[28] See page 156.
[29] *North Leith Minutes.*
[30] See page 165.
[31] *Ibid.*, 04 12 1878.

After 'agreeing to let the matter lie in abeyance for the time being', which may well suggest the Session did not yet feel completely confident about the organ, further soundings seem to have encouraged the Session to believe that most of the congregation did want one and that an appeal for unity on the matter might be productive:

> The Kirk Session trust that the congregation will see eye to eye on this and that the minority while hitherto opposed to the movement may see their way to agree with the majority so that, if an organ is to be introduced, all the members may join unitedly and heartily in promoting it.[32]

A barely civil letter from the secretary of the anti-organ pressure group within the congregation gave early intimation however that togetherness on the issue was not going to be forthcoming:

> 21st May 1879
> 27 Gordon Street
>
> I am requested by the committee of objectors to the introduction of an organ into the church to ask you to favour us with a copy, or leave to take a copy of the Communion Roll. You so doing will oblige
>
> G M Pairman[33]

Otherwise everything was going smoothly. The Precentor, G M Davidson, had resigned on his appointment to St Stephen's, thus removing the need to terminate his appointment in the near future. Funds to pay for an instrument were not going to be a pressing problem - one of the congregation had begged:

> ... to say that it will give me much pleasure to guarantee that the expenses will be met by me if sufficient funds are not collected by the time the money has to be paid.[34]

The heritors had no objections either, provided that they were absolved from all financial involvement in acquiring the instrument or making changes to the building. (The Kirk Session actually had to sign a bond 'relieving the Heritors of all

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[32] *Ibid.*, 05 02 1879.
[33] *Ibid.*, 04 06 1879.
[34] *Ibid.*, 04 06 1879.

risks in connection with the proposed alterations in all times coming'[35] to reassure them.)

By now the anti-organ committee had collected nearly five hundred names and were ready to petition the Presbytery:

> That your petitioners to the number of about 500 are members and adherents of the congregation worshipping in the Parish Church of North Leith. That they have been recently informed and believe that the Kirk Session of North Leith are at their own hands on the point of taking steps to put an organ in the said Parish Church and to commence the regular use thereof in public worship there. That your petitioners strongly object to the use of such an instrument in public worship as being at variance with the practice and traditions of the Church of Scotland, as offensive to the taste and feelings of many Scottish Presbyterians and is not conducive to the service of praise being taken part in by the whole congregation. That the proceedings of the Kirk Session have been conducted informally and in a way to prevent objections being stated on the part of the congregation and to exclude those who might object from having any opportunities to do so in the highest courts of the church.[36]

This was presumably a "punchy" version for the benefit of the Session, because later in the minutes there is a "toned down" and shortened version which was seems to have been the one actually submitted to the Presbytery by the Protestors.[37]

Naturally the Session had to defend itself:

> ... after some conversation on the subject it was agreed to permit the Organ Committee with the Clerk to draw up a narrative of all proceedings that have taken place in connection with the proposed introduction of an organ up to this date.[38]

"Pro-activity" being regarded the best form of defence it was also:

> ... agreed to scrutinise the names to the Petitions, and for this purpose request the clerk to prepare a list of the objectors in each district.

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[35] *Ibid.*, 06 08 1879
[36] *Ibid.*, 03 09 1879.
[37] See Appendix page 261.
[38] *North Leith Minutes*, 03 09 1879.

A certain amount of arm-twisting seems to have been indulged in by both sides. It is difficult to see how the Session got its information without employing some of the anti-organ camp's questionable tactics:

> (1) a great many of the parties whose names appear on it did not fully understand the purport of the Petition or Protest prefixed to their signatures.
>
> (2) a number of signatures were obtained under pressure, and even under misrepresentation in reference to the position and obligations of members in the event of their declining to sign said document some of them being led to believe that it was a petition against the mode in which the Kirk Session had ascertained the feelings of the congregation and not against the introduction of the instrument itself, while others were led to believe that they could not take up a neutral position and that if they did not sign the petition they would be called upon to contribute towards its erection and
>
> (3) a number of parties' names were written for them without their knowledge or consent.

The Session also denied that the:

> ... whole parties whose names appear upon the document before referred to object to the use of an organ in public worship, nearly one fourth of them have signified to have their names withdrawn from the petition, as will be seen from the schedules herewith produced a great number of those whose names appear upon the petition are quite indifferent if the instrument is introduced into the church or not.[39]

The Session's own assessment was that out of a congregation of 2,400 people, 186 members and 10 adherents objected to an organ. The defence put up by the Session was sufficient to persuade the Presbytery that:

> ... they see no cause for their interference in the matter of introducing instrumental music into North Leith Parish Church: and the Kirk Session being advised that the appeal does not prevent their proceeding: find that they are entitled at once to introduce an organ.[40]

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[39] *Ibid.*, 22 10 1879.
[40] *Ibid.*, 05 11 1879

However the Session was beginning to lose its nerve and was now:

> ... unwilling to introduce an instrument of so permanent a kind as long as the matter is under appeal and resolve that on and after the first Sunday in Dec. 1879 a harmonium should be used with the Services of the Church and the view of the Congregation to judge its effect.[41]

This was immediately (and probably very wisely) countermanded at the next meeting and there are no further references to a harmonium.

The Session was also reluctant to ordain eight urgently required new Elders during the controversy - a sure sign of the depth of feeling over instrumental music in the church. Fearful of fuelling further acrimony over filling vacancies with "fellow travellers" and presumably unwilling to accommodate "representatives of the various parties within the congregation" it decided to postpone dealing with that particular "hot potato" until later:

> ... they however take the liberty of suggesting the propriety of delaying the same till the question of introduction of instrumental music be settled in the church courts or at least till the General Assembly has given its decision thereon.[42]

The Synod of Lothian and Tweedale having allowed the organ by the not particularly handsome margin of 9 votes to 4, arrangements were put in hand to install an organ and appoint an organist.

At this stage the Minutes have to record events which must have caused much sadness and recrimination in both Session and Congregation.

The new order started brightly with 16 applicants for the post. A salary of £60 was offered for the following duties which, if nothing else, demonstrates the Session's determination to get its money's worth from their new organist:

> 1 That you conduct the Psalmody at all meetings for Public Worship in North Leith Parish Church whether on Sunday or Weekdays and at the opening of the Sabbath School.

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41 *Ibid.*, 05 11 1879.
42 *Ibid.*, 05 05 1880.

2 That you devote the necessary time for the instruction of the choir.

3 That you devote 2 hours a week for at least 3 months in each year to the teaching of congregational classes for the Theory and Practice of Music, one hour for the benefit of juveniles and the other for the more advanced.

4 That it is to be distinctly understood that all music to be played at any of the services be subject to the approval of the officiating clergyman and that the salary shall be at the rate of £60 sterling per annum payable quarterly with (should you give satisfaction) a half of the fee proceeds of one organ recital in the year.[43]

The appointment of an organist was left to the music committee which seems to have heard the candidates playing in their present posts. Seeking the help and advice of an experienced professional musician does not seem to have been considered necessary. When the church was entering a completely new and uncharted phase in its life such help would have been invaluable - an outside assessor would surely have insisted on hearing the candidates play in North Leith, for example.

The successful candidate, Charles Stuart Hamilton prefered to run a choral association rather than teach juveniles. The request seems to have been thought reasonable and the Psalmody Committee was instructed to 'confer with Mr Hamilton and arrange with him regarding the other part of clause 3 in his engagement'.[44]

Hamilton may have been very young and inexperienced - perhaps the reluctance to teach juveniles is more significant than it looks! He was noted as coming from St Paul's Church, Edinburgh - surely the Episcopal rather then the Free Church one. St Paul's Episcopal Church music seems to have been run on ambitious lines with not only a well paid organist (£75 per annum) - a Mr Jameson - but with the Edinburgh University Professor of Music, Sir Herbert Oakley, as Precentor and Director of Choral Music.[45] Whether or not Hamilton was an apprentice organist completely out of his depth in a demanding situation, he was not a success and just over a year later he handed in his notice:

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[43] *Ibid.*, 06 10 1880.
[44] *Ibid.*
[45] *St Paul's Episcopal Chapel, Edinburgh, Vestry Minutes,* 18 07 1881.

116 George Street [46]
13th January 1881

Owing to so many reports regarding my abilities as Organist in North Leith Parish Church I must tender my resignation

Enclosed is a copy of a letter which I think in my defence I must lay before the Session as one of the many annoyances to which I have been subjected:

"Private"

14 Waterloo Place
10th January 1881

My dear Mr Hamilton

I have just heard that you intend resigning the organistship in North Leith. Writing entirely as your friend I would say you were taking a wise course. I am strongly of the opinion that before undertaking another larger organ you should put yourself under some really good organist. There can be no doubt that you have a thorough musical knowledge but from some cause or other your organ playing is far from satisfactory. We have of course many strangers many of them musical people coming to hear the organ and the almost universal opinion I have heard expressed is "You have got a very fine instrument but the playing is not at all up to the mark". This feeling is also entertained by many members of the Kirk Session and it must be in your interest that the proposal for giving up the organistship should come from yourself.

You can of course ground your resignation on any cause you like - such as inconvenience of distance or anything of that sort.

Believe me in writing as I have done I have your good at heart and I shall always be glad to hear of your success.

Thos Phipps

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[46] This is the address of Hamilton and Müller Organ Builders which suggests that Charles Stuart Hamilton was related to the David Hamilton of St John's, Edinburgh.

Although the letter was kindly meant it was far from prudent and almost inevitably when it became public knowledge, Mr Phipps felt obliged to tender his resignation from the Session.[48]

Hamilton did have some supporters - Mr James Simpson and Mr James Downie for example - and the Session must have thought it only fair:

> that the clerk be instructed to write to Mr Hamilton and state that Session assume he has given in his resignation under pressure and request him to specify the nature of the pressure (if any) and indicate the quarter or quarters from whence it came; and also to state the nature of the reports as to his ability and of the annoyances to which he states he has been subjected and from whom he received them.[49]

The Moderator might well have been a little uneasy at inviting the organist to open his heart on these matters as Hamilton's lengthy reply[50] makes it clear that theminister was the source of most of the frustrations. At this distance of time it is neither practical nor fair to apportion blame but merely to record an early breakdown in communications between a Minister and Organist. Certain operational procedures at the church did seem guaranteed to cause trouble however - giving out the hymns just before the service being one of them. (Unlike a precentor, the organist needs to prepare even well-known hymns). Whether or not Hamilton was at fault over failing to collect the hymns personally before the service, as charged by the Minister, such short notice was bound to result in unsatisfactory playing particularly when practice facilities on the organ during the week were either reluctantly conceded or proscribed altogether as at North Leith - yet anotherindication of ambivalence towards the organ and a Session's inexperience in dealing with musicians.

The Session did learn something from this unhappy and embarrassing experience and, having accepted Hamilton's resignation and giving him the "honourable

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Friday 1st February 1881

Gentlemen

For reasons which I have stated to the Moderator but which I think it unnecessary to trouble you I beg most respectfully to tender my resignation of Elder at North Leith Church. I have not come to this step rashly but after serious reflection and it may be considered final, and I would ask the Kirk Session to do me the kindness of accepting my resignation simply and at once.

Thos Phipps

49 *North Leith Minutes*, 19 01 81.

50 See Appendix page 261.

discharge" he requested, they tidied up both the organist's contract and the method of appointment. Later though they were to lapse into even graver misjudgements.

The new contract was much simpler and even allowed the organist 8 hours a week in the church for teaching. As with the previous contract no mention was made of holiday entitlement, which was almost guaranteed to become a grievance at some stage.

From 24 applicants the Session drew up a short list of four whom they each required to play for a Sunday's services and to take a choir practice. The Session members and the Deacons then voted for each candidate and Mr Pettie, Organist and Choirmaster at Bo'ness Parish Church, was elected. It could be suspected that he was in fact the best candidate but an expert adjudicator would have provided objective confirmation. Apart from rejecting Pettie's request for a set of church keys 'so that he could have access to the instrument at any time', because it 'might lead to difficulties with the heritors', and reminding him that 'while it was the wish of the Session to afford him every facility for practice during reasonable hours they disapprove of his prolonging his practice till such late hours as he is in the habit of doing'[51] - much of his 36 year tenure of the post seems to have been happy and productive.

Indications that relationships were beginning to falter, however, came when the Session surprisingly declined to mark Pettie's 25th anniversary as organist of the church. Despite a recommendation from the Psalmody Committee that the Sessionshould either 'take up the matter [of a Testimonial] as a session and appoint a committee with the view of raising the Testimonial or that they should express sympathy with the object but leave the organisation of the move to private effort', a motion 'to have nothing to do with it'[52] proposed by Mr Coltart was carried by nine votes to six. The Minister must have felt the Session was being ungracious, because he 'then made it clear that this decision had been arrived at not from want of appreciation of Mr Pettie's services but because the majority felt that the movement should be organised outwith the Session.' One wonders if this was really the case - 'nothing to do with it' hardly speaks of any sympathy with the proposal. When a North Leith minister was given a handsome tribute on his 25th anniversary, surely its first organist might have expected some form of official appreciation as well.

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51 *North Leith Minutes* 18 06 1882.
52 *Ibid.*, 20 06 1906.

Perhaps Pettie's playing was already giving cause for concern, but it is just as possible that there was still a residual resentment of having an organ in the church at all and a consequent strong disinclination to pay the organist any more than had been contracted. A more worldy-wise, let alone kind-hearted, Session might well have sanctioned a 25th-anniversary celebration with heavy hints to the organist that he should also regard it as the appropriate time to retire if his playing was beginning to deteriorate.

In July 1907 Pettie suffered from rheumatism in the right arm and was given a month's paid leave - a concession that was not repeated when it became clear that another month of recuperation was necessary. In 1909 holiday pay was offered for the first (and only) time but was vigorously opposed by Coltart who 'asked that his dissent should be recorded in the minutes against the principle of the motion and against the amount agreed to be given [25/- per week for four weeks].[53]

Further signs of eroding confidence are hinted at in a cross letter from the Psalmody Committee, chiding Pettie for ordering music without permission in February 1909. A year later a request for more anthem books led to an inquisition on the numbers and attendance of choir members - and a terse rejection:

> The Psalmody Committee were of the opinion the Choir Master should confine himself to the Anthem Books and the sheet anthems he has in stock.

By 1913 goodwill was in final decline. The Psalmody Committee had seen fit to demand that Pettie should sign a contract, most of the conditions of which were identical to which he had assented in 1881. The contentious condition was that of an elementary class which the Committee clearly saw as being essential to the continued efficiency of the choir:

> Condition 2 He shall practise weekly with the choir and must train an elementary class during the winter months within the session building for the express purpose of keeping up the efficiency of the choir. He shall do his very utmost to secure and maintain its efficiency.

Presumably a further sign of disfavour was the Psalmody Committee's rejection of Pettie's request to 'delete the last sentence' in the provision that 'He shall be

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53 *Ibid.*, 02 06 1909.

allowed one month's holiday during each year if he desires it but must provide and pay a substitute during this period of absence from his duties'. One wonders if a more conciliatory approach over holiday pay might have produced happier results for the Psalmody Committee.

A lengthy report[54] in late 1914 chronicles the final months of Pettie's incumbency of the post of Organist and Choirmaster at North Leith Church. In it the Convenor, Mr Davidson, draws attention to the matters brought up in the 'informal conversation' the Psalmody Commitee had with Pettie:

1 how might the membership of the choir be increased?

2 was not Mr Pettie's standard of qualification for such membership unduly high?

3 did not his manner exercise a discouraging influence on intending recruits?

4 the irregularity of his playing of the organ was called into question.

5 why was it he did not regularly play at the opening of the Sunday School as laid down in the terms of his contract?

Assuming a general goodwill on the part of the Psalmody Committee, one might see in these complaints an elderly and rather prickly organist hanging on to a post well after he should have retired. The way Pettie was bullied into running an elementary class when it was obvious that neither he nor the congregation were interested (seven females and one male seems to have been the biggest takeup of places on this course) is unedifying, however, and seems designed to harry him out of his post.[55] Clearly determined to get rid of him, the Session next used a tactic which would would have almost certainly guaranteed it a hefty fine at an employment tribunal today.

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[54] See Appendix page 264.

[55] The *Psalmody Committee Minutes* note Pettie's refusal to draft a notice for a second attempt at an elementary class.
North Leith Psalmody Committee Minutes, 20 05 1914.

The shortage of tenors in the North Leith Church Choir had progressed beyond crisis point and neither the choir nor the Session had been able to do anything about it, so when Pettie fired the last remaining one the inevitable obloquy rained down on his head. The circumstances which led Pettie to this decision have been repeated time and time again in choirs all over the world. Tenor, Mr J. C. Wright, had joined another choir, and while willing to grace the choir with his presence on a Sunday, was regretfully unable to attend the Thursday rehearsal. Pettie, unsurprisingly, had declined to accept this arrangement. That a presumably conscientious singer would propose such a thing is difficult to believe; that he would have the support of a Session in so doing is quite incredible.

The Session had demanded a full statement from Pettie about Mr Wright's dismissal. A succinct statement which noted that that Mr Wright had joined the Voluntary Choir of St Mary's Cathedral which required his attendance on Sunday and Thursday evenings was 'deemed unsatisfactory' and 'further elucidation' was sought. Pettie obliged:

> Mr Wright's position is simply this: that he is only an ex-member and not a member. His duties at St Mary's Cathedral conflict with what we require.

This apparent 'evasion of the point of issue' prompted the Session to apply to Mr Wright for a statement 'which says that when he became a member of Mr Collinson's voluntary choir in February 1914 he informed Mr Pettie <u>then</u> that he should be unable to attend practice on Thursday evenings but could attend Sunday mornings if allowed to do so'.

Despite Mr Wright being told that he must either attend practice or vacate his seat in the choir he seemed not to have been vouchsafed a 'definite reply' to his offer to attend on Sunday mornings by Pettie. One would have thought that even the most thick-skinned would have understood Pettie's position - apparently not:

> As Mr Pettie was fully aware of the circumstances in which Mr Wright was placed [not "had placed himself"?] this intimation was tantamount to dismissal. A dismissal which in the present circumstances of the choir Mr Pettie had showed himself to have acted with 'indiscretion and injustice'.

For those who might suspect that Pettie had every right to dispense with Mr Wright's services the Session carefully explained the 'indiscretion and injustice' of the case:

> Indiscretion, because being left with one tenor in his choir - Mr Gorman not being available - he has dismissed that one voice; injustice, because his dismissal should have been conveyed to Mr Wright in February and not delayed till October.

By 14 votes to 4 Pettie was dismissed. Although noted in the Psalmody Committee minutes (but not in those of the Session) the choir went on protracted strike in protest. The four ladies (Misses Robertson, Clark, Alexander and Keddie) who did stay earned sufficient approbation that the Committee:

> ... also agreed to recommend to the Kirk Session that some ways should be taken to recognise the services of the four lady members of the choir who had continued their duties after Mr Pettie's retiral.[56]

Before a replacement was appointed Condition 3 of the organist's contract had to be modified to take notice of recent difficulties and to avoid any unpleasantnesses in the future:

> He shall practise weekly with the choir and shall train a junior choir for the express purpose of furnishing recruits to the choir. He shall keep a list of names and addresses of the members of the choir and shall intimate to the secretary of the Psalmody Committee any admission thereto and any resignation therefrom with the reason assigned in the latter case and such admission shall not be valid until approved by the Psalmody Committee.

The Psalmody Committee and Session must have congratulated themselves on their firm handling of a disagreeable situation and have looked forward to acquiring a new organist who would have clear guidelines to follow.

However their attempt to appointment a new organist quickly descended into farce.

The Psalmody Committee sifted through fifty five applications and selected a short leet of three who were then tested by Mr Collinson (Organist of St Mary's Episcopal

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56 *Ibid.*, 20 06 1915.

Cathedral, Edinburgh) in North Leith Church. Collinson's report gave Mr David Blair of St John's Church the highest marks and the Psalmody Committee 'unanimously agreed to recommend to the Kirk Session the appointment of Mr David Blair as organist and choirmaster at a salary of £60 (the new organ contract had contained the figure of £80).

Either the fact that the audition had to be conducted without a choir[57] or something about Blair's testimonials which were read to the Kirk Session caused concern, but 'after some discussion the Session agreed to hear also the application of Dr Frew[58], Organist of the High Church Parish, Inverness' one of the applicants who had not been placed on the short leet. Had the Session adopted Coltart's motion to accept the Psalmody Committee's recommendation - and Collinson's expert advice (presumably he would have suggested re-advertising if he was not happy with the candidates he had heard) - it would have saved itself a lot of time and disappointment. Despite solicitous enquiries, Frew soon withdrew, leaving the field open to Blair, one would have thought. That does not appear to have been a viable option, so another candidate (from the short leet this time), Mr Marden of Bathgate, was invited to 'conduct a service'. Neither he nor Blair now being thought suitable, it was decided to readvertise the post at the salary of £80 mentioned in the post-Pettie contract. The next two Psalmody Committee recommendations both withdrew: Mr F O Sheard because 'he feared that the action of our organ would spoil his touch as a pianist' and Mr Diggle of Wigan for unspecified reasons despite a guaranteed salary package of £150 if he came north. Fortunately the interim organist, Mr Henderson, was willing to take the post but he was soon to be sent to the Front. The unhappy saga continued throughout the War until Henderson resumed his post at £60 - the Session again declining to pay him the £80 they had advertised. When he resigned for business reasons, the by now presumably "shell-shocked" Psalmody Committee decided on another strategy to get a good man:

> After an animated discussion as to the procedure to be adopted, in which Mr Davidson strongly advocated advertising, it was moved by Mr Blair, and seconded by Mr Berry,

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> The result of the Secretary's interview with Mr Collinson with regard to the services of a choir in the examination of the leet was reported and it was decided in the existing circumstances to dispense with a choir for this purpose.

Ibid., 01 03 1915.

58 In the unlikely event there were two Dr Frews in Scotland at that time the Session may have been swayed by their applicant's qualifications and post which was then Govan Parish Church. He moved to St Paul's, Greenock in 1915, presumably having rejected the move to Inverness as well as Leith. Information from *Dictionary of Organs and Organists*, p342.

> that Mr Cowie (St Cuthbert's), Mr Hollins (U F St George's) and Dr Ross (Broughton Place) be asked if there was any person they could specially recommend to the situation of Organist and Choirmaster, but if no suitable man could be obtained in that way, that recourse be had in advertising.[59]

Happily Cowie's recommendation, Christie Jupp ARCO, was a great success and by 1921 the Psalmody Committee could record:

> Mr Powrie drew attention to the popularity of the choir and to the increase in members and efficiency.

Needless to say everything was as yet not quite perfect:

> While it was acknowledged that the choir singing had improved, it was generally felt that the singing of the congregation has not, probably owing to its obtaining an insufficient lead from the organ especially in the case of hymns with which it was not very familiar.[60]

The next round of complaints is reminiscent of those that dogged Hamilton at St John's Episcopal, Edinburgh, especially the following:

> That Mr Jupp should give the congregation a definite lead from the organ and not from the choir in the psalm and hymn tunes for the first two verses.[61]

Like Mr Jupp, the early Episcopal Organists seem to have been expert enough musicians; Tait, Hamilton, Müller and Surenne were all able composers and performers. Even the complaints in St John's Edinburgh about Hamilton seem to have been about levels of choir achievement and the loudness of his playing - there never seems to have been any suggestion that he should be sacked for incompetence. Worries about basic standards of organ playing in the Church of Scotland though were to cause enquiries at General Assembly level and calls for the appointment of Inspectors, which suggests that the teething problems experienced by churches like North Leith were far from unique. How these were addressed is discussed in Chapter 7.

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59 *North LeithPsalmody Committee Minutes*, 26 04 1920.
60 *North Leith Minutes*, 16 03 1921.
61 *Ibid.*, 27 03 1923.

Private Chapels

Informed patronage has often inspired musical excellence. The Scottish aristocracy's enthusiasm for private chapels in the mid-19th century would seem to have offered career opportunities and enhanced status for the organist and provided ideal centres for the development of Scottish church music. While some chapels merely provided *lebensraum* for the musical ambitions of aristocratic ladies, others did employ able professionals. Many important musicians from George C Martin (St Mary's Dalkeith), Charles Macpherson (Weem), Lee Ashton (Beil) and Herbert Walton (Haddo) to Iain Whyte (Glentannar) started as private musicians in country houses. Despite the distinction of such musical luminaries, a review of the more significant private chapels suggests that the music within them suffered from the same indecision as to aims and objectives as did that of the parish churches. The motivation of those 19th-century Scottish landowners who had enough private means to either build their own chapels or to donate parish churches may have been partly aesthetic; surely more than one architect would have reminded an aristocratic patron that 'in such magnificent buildings as Taymouth Castle a Domestic Chapel generally forms one of its appendages'.[62] In an ironic reversal of present-day priorities the large conservatory in Beil House, Dunbar, was rebuilt in 1883 as an Episcopal chapel [St Margaret's].[63] W E Gladstone's slightly unconvincing apologetic for building the episcopal St Andrew's, Fasque - 'the village (Church of Scotland) kirk is already crowded and does not, I believe, supply the full amount of seat-room for which the heritors are legally liable',[64] has suggestions of "keeping up with the Joneses" in the chapel building stakes. Chapel building may have been a calculated show of piety; wealthy landowners were all too aware of problems ahead for the aristocracy in the rapidly changing 19th century, and dropping the raffish outlook of the Regency and replacing it with an obviously devout lifestyle may have been seen as a timeous move. Perhaps in our cynical age it is too ingenuous to suggest that this chapel and church building may have been just a response to deep religious convictions. The Marchioness of Lothian, who provided St John's, Jedburgh did eventually cede to the Roman Catholic Church - a sure test of sincerity at a time when such a move by an aristocrat was regarded as almost traitorous.[65]

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[62] A. Rowan, 'Taymouth Castle, Perthshire', *Country Life*, 08 10 1964.
[63] Royal Commission on Ancient Historical Monuments in Scotland data base.
[64] D. C. Lathbury, *Op.Cit.*, p238.
[65] See the abuse The Marquess of Bute received in the *Perthshire Courier* . when he became a RC in 1869 or, more recently, the opprobium attached to the Duchess of Kent when she converted.

While some aristocratic residences like Biel had *en-suite* chapels, many were placed away from the "big house". Most, if not all, Scottish private chapels served the estate workers and local community as well as the owner's families, so were no more "exclusive" than many kirks with their splendid pews or galleries for the heritors. Among these "detached chapels" can be numbered the Episcopal St Mary's,Dalkeith (1845),[66] St Andrew's, Fasque (1847), St David's, Weem (1878), All Souls', Invergowrie [1898], St Thomas' Aboyne (1909) and the very much later Church of Scotland, St Conan's Kirk, Loch Awe (1935).

The prototype for them all was probably St John's, Jedburgh. In 1843 William Dyce enthusiastically noted the 'beautiful chapel the Marchioness of Lothian is building at Jedburgh' was being set up for 'the musical service'.[67] As a photograph[68] makes clear, St John's "suitability" for 'the musical service' has been achieved by cutting off the congregation from the chancel visually and symbolically (note the pulpit reached from the chancel, not the nave) rather than by concerns over an apt acoustical and visual environment for choral music[69] where congregations can both see and hear the choir comfortably. Choral music, polyphonic or otherwise, was a very low priority in fact, while the *alternim* unison performance of psalms, canticles and so on was essential to well-ordered liturgy. The Ecclesiologists (Successors to the Cambridge Camden Society) regarded the choir as part of the 'sacred office'[70] not as a musical body *per se* - a semi-clerical status which made it desirable to place the choristers with the clergy in the chancel and to keep the congregation at a distance in the nave. Such an exclusive set-up could not have done much to foster an interest in contemporary church music amongst Scots nervous of ritual. Dean Ramsay, for example, reports a 'favourite female servant' who had been taken to a 'full choir service' by 'the lady [the Marchioness of Lothian?] who had been instrumental in getting up these musical services at an Episcopal church [St John's, Jedburgh?]':

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66 St Mary's, Dalkeith, appears to have been built, at least partly, in response to a petition from 106 local Episcopalians who requested:

> ... the Duke's sanction, concurrence, and assistance in the building of an Episcopal chapel and the establishment of an Episcopal congregation in the town or vicinity of Dalkeith.

Scottish Chronicle, 13 09 07. See Appendix page 266.

67 *Dyce Papers*, p633.

68 See Appendix p306.

69 Indeed of all the churches mentioned above only St Conan's would provide a genuine musical space suitable for anything from Gregorian chants sung in procession to a Bach Cantata with orchestra. See Appendix p306.

70 *Dyce Papers*, p486.

> ... accordingly , she very kindly took her down to church in the carriage and on returning asked her what she thought of the music, etc.: "Ou, it's verra bonny, verra bonny; but oh, my lady, it's an awfu' way of spending the Sabbath". The good woman could only look upon the whole thing as a musical performance.[71]

St John's Jedburgh had been the 'first outcome of the Oxford Movement'[72] in Scotland but in general one imagines that Scottish aristocrats were not all that keen to have obviously Tractarian/Anglo-Catholic services in their chapels - the dis-establishment overtones were only too apparent while even the non-juring background of the Scottish Episcopal Church could cause embarrassment as the many wrangles over the English and Scottish Communion Services demonstrate.[73] However non-Tractarian the services, St Mary's, Dalkeith was built to the exacting requirements of the Ecclesiologists and shares the hole-in-the-wall pulpit of the earlier St John's, Jedburgh. It seems to have been the most influential (and the biggest) private Scottish musical establishment complete with salaried lower vocal parts. Bernarr Rainbow points out that the 'not inconsiderable'[74] fee of £72 *per annum* paid to the three principal adult singers was generous by the standards of the time, though the singers themselves clearly did not think so. According to the Rev L. S. Bushby in a letter accompanying their *Memorial of the Layclerks for an increase in salary* [75] of 1854 addressed to the Duke of Buccleuch, the average English Cathedral layclerk was only paid £50. Furthermore Bushby reckoned that the St Mary's layclerks actually earned £84 *per annum* which was a quite tolerable competency for the time.

The St Mary's repertoire, as indicated by the extant music books - many selected from Novello and Co's *Cathedral Music Series* - was almost distressingly conventional "cathedral fare".[76] Judging by the condition of the organ scores - admittedly not the most reliable of tests - even this repertoire does not seem to have been investigated as fully as it might. The young Martin (later to become Organist of St Paul's Cathedral, London), who had first touched a keyboard at the age of 16, may

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71 E. B. Ramsay, *Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character* , p219.
72 D. M. Bertie, *Scottish Episcopal Clergy 1689 -2000,* p579.
73 W. E. Gladstone launched broadsides at *inter alia* Bishop Ewing and Dean Ramsay over attempts to outlaw the Scottish Office.
74 B. Rainbow,*The Choral Revival in the Anglican Church,* p224.
75 Presumably nothing came of the *Memorial* because in 1889 when a review of the musical arrangements was undertaken the basic lay clerk salary was still £72. Two other paid singers earned £17 each *per annum.* See Appendix page 266.
76 As a comparison of the St Mary's repertoire with that found in an 1857survey of English Cathedrals by the *Musical Remembrancer* makes clear.

well have been anxious to remedy the gaps in his knowledge of the "standard repertoire" by gaining experience of the most performed anthems and settings of the English cathedrals rather than striking off into new territory. Clearly neither he nor his successors were innovatory in the music they chose. One wonders also if the standards were very impressive. The boys in particular may not have been the most able youngsters in Dalkeith.

This portrait of a 'choir in Wales or Scotland' may well refer to places like St Mary's Dalkeith or St David's Weem which ran all-male choirs. It was written in 1927 but the situation "Choirstall" describes had probably existed for years. Dalkeith may have enjoyed a quasi-cathedral standard for only twenty years and Weem may never have done so. To maintain a quality all-male choir in such small communities as Dalkeith and Weem in particular, would have been an uphill task at best.

> Take an example of a cathedral trained organist who is organist of an episcopal (not state church) in Wales or Scotland. He has a surpliced choir of eight men and fourteen boys. Thirteen of the boys have no voice to speak of, yet the choirmaster must have them, as they are usually all he can lay his hands upon. They are usually of the poorer class and uncertain in their attendance, owing to the fact they have to run errands for the local tradesman, and also have a milk round to do before morning school. ... Yet that choirmaster is expected to produce results equal, or almost, to a cathedral or some fashionable London church which has a choir school.[77]

Not that things were necessarily much better in some contemporary UK cathedrals. The educational standards of the Choir School at the theoretically much more advantageously-placed St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, Edinburgh seem to have given concern at least until the 1930s;[78] anxious and ambitious parents would surely have been discouraged from enrolling their boys there by reports that:

> Although the general education of the choristers is sound as far as it goes, it only enables them on leaving the school to get into some office, notably insurance offices, but gives them no certificate to qualify them for higher schools, and eventually for the University.[79]

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[77] *Musical Opinion*, September 1927.
[78] The distinguished organist and educationist, Dr Francis Thomas, was a choirboy in St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral in the 1930s - presumably his education had been satisfactory.
[79] *Scottish Chronicle*, 14 01 1921.

A review of the St Mary's, Dalkeith musical arrangements in 1899 suggests a fairly serious slackening of interest in daily choral services - not helped by disenchanted lay clerks. Whether or not the 'poor standards'[80] during Mr Guild's time as organist had precipitated retrenchment to a proposed establishment of 'two good male voicesand eight boys' for Sunday services and the abandoning of most weekly services can only be conjectured. As many private chapels were to close at the turn of the century as economy measures, financial considerations must have played a part. The son and grandson of the 5th Duke of Buccleuch (who had died in 1884), do not appear to have been greatly committed to the chapel - indeed Alice, Duchess of Gloucester, reports that the latter (her father) grew very impatient if the sermon went on too long and 'was not religious'.[81] Be that as it may, the church was transferred to the Diocese of Edinburgh in 1915, though remaining the property of the Duke of Buccleuch until it was finally given to the congregation in 1958.

An unusual arrangement (to save money?) which probably also contributed to the unsatisfactory state of musical affairs at Dalkeith was the dual appointment at Dalkeith and St Peter's Edinburgh. Martin Thomas Hewlett - a very able and well-respected musician who died young - and David Guild directed the music in both churches. An assistant played the organ for the St Peter's Morning Service.

Whatever the quality of the music making, in the chapel's heyday and long after (a note in the local paper refers to a lucrative week for the choirboys as a backing group for a 1920s biblical epic in a Dalkeith cinema[82]) the music of the 'Buccleuch Canaries' seems to have been well known - it had obviously inspired Hamilton in its early days for example - though there do not appear to be any objective reports extant about the quality of its singing.

Probably on the grounds of expense the majority of Scottish aristocrats seemed to have been unwilling, to imitate the Dalkeith model very closely. However it is almost impossible to believe that St David's Weem was not intended to be a carbon copy of St Mary's. It was built by Sir Alexander Menzies in 1870 as an Episcopal

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[80] A despondent note on Goss's *Lord let me know my end* (a simple enough piece in all conscience) 'badly sung Dec. 1 1882' may have been symptomatic. Some of the scores have the elaborate Amens crossed out, which is surprising for a professional ensemble where the alto and tenor singers were expected to be familiar with both G and C clefs.

[81]

> My mother always professed to being religious but not my father. He attended on Sundays because he felt he ought to, but wound his watch threateningly if the sermon was taking too long.

Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester, *Memories of Ninety Years*, p31.

[82] See Appendix page 267.

Chapel but after a somewhat curious history it is now the property of the Church of Scotland - though the Auld Kirk of Weem still exists.[83] As a private chapel St David's mirrored St Mary's, Dalkeith, with promising young musicians like Charles Macpherson and Samuel Prince Guttridge (1863-1952) being given their first appointments by the Menzies. Information about St David's is impossible to come by.[84] The normally informative *Scottish Chronicle* is remarkably restrained about the circumstances surrounding both the closing of the Chapel 'which caused much talk in the area' and the transfer of the chapel to the Church of Scotland.[85] Unlike the extensive North Leith Minutes those of Weem Parish church do not even mention the change of building! Boys from the Menzies estate appear to have sung in the choir being paid a penny a service while the more enterprising - or mercenary - of them also sang in the local Episcopal Church (Strathtay?). What does point to a deliberate policy of copying Jedburgh[86] and Dalkeith was the architecture of the chapel, the provision of a fine organ (by Walker), a boys' choir and the employment of a succession of able professional organists.

The first organist seems, however, to have been the eldest daughter of Sir Robert and Lady Menzies, the future Mrs Atholl MacGregor, who, at her death on December 10 1906, was reported by the Scottish Chronicle as not only a very able trainer of boys choirs but one who seems to have retained the boys' loyalty many years after they finished singing for her.[87] Her successors were professionals, Macpherson (1887-1888), Guttridge (1888-1903) and a Mr Stocks.

Although paid for by the Gladstone family, St Andrew's Fasque was run more like a parish church than a private chapel. W E Gladstone made copious notes of the music performed at the consecration service on August 28, 1847 though he did not reveal the provenance of the choir which must have been fairly expert to have

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[83] See Appendix page 268.
[84] Guttridge's son could not recall his father ever speaking about Weem!
[85] *Scottish Chronicle,* 15 06 06.
[86] St David's relationship with the Diocese of St Andrews may have been slightly tense. Bishop Wordsworth was reported as sending the Rev E. C. Tollenmache to 'the new Mission at Weem' in 1870 (a hardly flattering description for a beautifully appointed chapel [see page 307] though the bishop may just have been wary of another possible high church enclave in his diocese. The last chaplain, Rev, later Canon, John Harrison appears to have ended his relationship with St David's in 1906 over his refusal to allow the divorced Sir Neil Menzies to remarry in the chapel. Building another Episcopal Church, St Margaret's, Aberfeldy, so close to Weem the same year seems profligate at best if not a clear challenge to the *status quo.* The end of St David's as an Episcopal Chapel seems to have been mainly precipitated by the deteriorating financial fortunes of the Menzies family.
[87] *Scottish Chronicle,* 12 12 06.

managed the music.[88] As there seems to have been quite a lot of plainsong and the Warden of Glenalmond officiated at all the services, one imagines that the Glenalmond Choir sang under the direction of its first choirmaster, the Helmore/St Mark's Chelsea trained Joseph Plant. Gladstone was a competent musician, so he may well have wished to ensure that the music of the family chapel was maintained to a reasonable standard, though one doubts that his family would either have had the inclination or the resources to maintain a St Mary's, Dalkeith set-up. The 1846 organ by Hamilton, a 'barrel-and-finger' instrument,[89] may well indicate that a musician was not always available to play for services and its presence is not indicative of an ambitious musical establishment anyway. Between 1846 and 1851 Gladstone kept 'full and carefully indexed lists of the Psalms (in Tate and Brady's version) which are to be used on each Sunday, with the tunes to which they are to be sung' [again hardly sophisticated fare!]. He also noted the number of attendants [attenders?] and if 'he [the preacher] preached in surplice or the gown'.[90]

Other aristocratic chapels could only rise to a harmonium, which in the case of Rossie Priory was played by Lady Kinnaird. The 'beautiful' Rossie Chapel had been opened and dedicated by the Tractarian Bishop Forbes of Brechin in 1866, since when it:

> ... had proved quite an institution in the district, and frequently crowded by all ranks, classes and denominations.[91]

The congregation for the fourth anniversary services on Friday 4th February 1870 included clergymen of different denominations for example. The choir - 'one beautiful feature of the chapel' directed by Lady Kinnaird was composed entirely of the domestics [female or at least female and male?] which suggests that services were not unduly high church. The music did include a chanted psalm and various selections from *Hymns Ancient and Modern,* however. The chapel was closed by Lady Kinnaird's son, the 10th Lord, in 1878. If this was an economy or anti-

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> The Morning Service then proceeded according to the usual form except that Ps lxxxiv (Bedford)was sung after the Third Collect, with the sanction of the Primus, and the Sanctus (Tonelli) was sung before the commencement of the Communion Service (Humphreys). The responses to the Commandments were chanted to the organ, and Ps.c. (Savoy) was sung before the sermon. The Canticles had been sung as usual (Venite 5th Greg.; Te Deum, 6th Greg.; Benedictus, Farrant)

D. C. Lathbury, *Op. Cit.*, p447.

89 C. D. S. Field 'A musical apparatus of somewhat complex and intricate mechanism', *Journal of the British Institute of Organ Studies*, No.24 p16.

90 D. C. Lathbury, *Op. Cit.*, p203.

91 *Perthshire Courier,* 08 02 1870.

Episcopal move it was not a particularly astute one, because Lady Kinnaird promptly opened another chapel in Knapp and later provided a benefaction which paid for the magnificent Hippolyte Blanc-designed All Souls', Invergowrie in 1891.[92]

Probably only in Dalkeith and possibly Weem was the "English Cathedral Service" pursued with any determination. Elsewhere the priority was to have good hymn and Anglican psalm singing and a nice rendering by the choir of a chanted Canticle and the occasional anthem. Within these limited parameters choirs like Rossie and Cromlix may have exercised a small but positive influence on Scottish Church Music.

The number of closures of chapels at the end of the century and the shortness of time organists seemed prepared to work in them, suggests that too much was attempted with insufficient resources - even in the most prestigious establishment, St Mary's Dalkeith, all the singers' parts were handwritten at a time when printed parts were available (the prices are on the full score covers). Despite a salary double that of most organists (£100), Martin soon left for another country-house appointment which must indicate at least some dissatisfaction with life at Dalkeith. Macpherson also moved on to an English country-house post within a short period of taking up the Weem appointment. Both men shortly thereafter left private musical service altogether.

In none of the private establishments cited above is there any evidence of careful planning and skilled direction of music programmes. The aristocrats who employed gifted teenagers to direct the music in their chapels clearly were not prepared to make the necessary financial commitment to obtain more experienced musicians. Quite probably as well they did not even realise that teenagers could not lead choirs of men and boys effectively - a fact that would have been regarded as self-evident in more sophisticated musical environments. It is also clear that enthusiasm for a nicely turned-out choir in a lovely chapel waned fairly quickly among the aristocracy in the latter part of the 19th century. In the early days of the Scottish organ the same sort of problems appear to have arisen in all denominations and situations. Inadequate leadership by vestries, sessions and wealthy patrons and

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92 The 9th Lord's widow, Frances Lady Kinnaird, opened a temporary Mission Chapel at Knapp on the second floor of two cottages. The main focus of Mission Activity shifted to Invergowrie in 1883 and the Knapp Chapel was closed in 1901.

D. M. Bertie, *Op. Cit.*, p 557.

a feeling that music should not be too major a financial imposition led to frustrations which were usually revealed in the cavalier and insensitive treatment of organists. To invest in excellence was clearly an unattractive option!

Chapter 6

Excellence by design - and chance.

Summary

Improvements in Scottish Church music were led by the precentors, who achieved such success through singing classes and choral unions that the installation of organs in the churches to service the widening range of hymns and choral music they introduced became almost inevitable. The introduction of organs was also encouraged by the grants of Andrew Carnegie, whose motivation for providing them was more generally "cultural" than "church musical." Excellence before the early years of the 20th century when the General Assembly started taking a much more pro-active line in church music, however, was usually the result of the determination of individual ministers and sessions to employ top-quality musicians and to support them in their work. As a "footnote" the seemingly trivial matter of choir dress, which has also played a part in encouraging enthusiasm for choral music is reviewed.

The average 18th- or 19th- century Scottish precentor has been immortalised as ill-educated, poor and not particularly musical. The church may have even rejoiced in the mediocrity of the musical lead he provided:

> the quality of the musical material, or its execution, is of no account if the heart be rightly exercised.[1]

While in rural districts this stereotype may have had some validity it would be unwise to assume that this held true for the main cities. Among the leading city precentors there were able choral conductors and instrumentalists who were committed to the development of music both in church and school. By the middle of the 19th century many churches took their psalmody very seriously and were prepared to engage high quality musicians.[2] Farmer[3] notes precentors who later had

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[1] J. Hadden, *Music in Early Scotland Vol. XII*, p237, quoted in I. Macdougall, *Op. Cit.*, p 38.

[2]

> A person qualified to conduct the Psalmody and to instruct the congregation in the theory of music is at present wanted for the United Presbyterian Church, Wellington Street, Glasgow. To a competent leader the Salary of £50 per annum will be paid.

Glasgow Herald, 12 02 1853.

[3] A. Farmer, *Op Cit.*, p444.

distinguished careers in opera house and concert room. This should not surprise anybody; the world of the freelance musican has always been precarious, and where employment is proffered it has to be accepted gratefully. Precentor posts may not always have been particularly glamorous (though the high esteem in which R A Smith of Paisley Abbey and St George's Church, Edinburgh was held suggests that some were), but when *The Scotsman* could report that the Edinburgh Professional Concerts had to be abandoned for the season in 1829,[4] because of a lack of subscribers a regular precenting job with possible teaching opportunities within the congregation had considerable attractions. John Wilson (1800-1849) could be regarded as a musician whose musical career was only made possible by his church precenting. He had started life as a printer, but was eventually able to devote himself wholly to the teaching of music through his reputation made as Precentor of St Mary's Church, Edinburgh, where he drew large crowds to his church.[5] He later became an internationally known operatic tenor and one of the greatest singers of Scots song. Sir Alexander Mackenzie, in his early days as a Scottish freelance violinist and pianist, was a precentor (of St George's Church, Edinburgh). His heart may not have been completely in this area of music making (he does not appear to have written any church music apart from a few anthems in his youth), but it was an employment opportunity which even a young musician of his distinction could not afford to ignore.

The Disruption had two gratifying effects for the precentors. Employment opportunities doubled (though most "in post" precentors remained with the Established Church[6] - surely another indicator of the precarious nature of the musical job market) and both the Established and Free Churches started to take teacher training seriously. Preparing pupils to take their part in psalmody at home and church was an obvious priority in the schools, many then being run by the churches, and precentors like W H Linlithgow, T L Hately, J Ebsworth, W Strang, T M Hunter, W M Miller and (Sir Alexander) Mackenzie found new areas of influence and responsibility in Training College and School. (Mackenzie even pioneered class piano teaching.)[7]

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[4] *Scotsman*, 03 01 1829.

[5] Information from D. Fraser, *Op.Cit.*, p 75.

[6]

> Hately; one of the few precentors who came out with the Free Church in Edinburgh,
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> J. S. A[nderson], *Old Scottish Psalm Tunes*, pviii.

[7]

> With a careful grouping of the pupils at fairly equal stages of advancement, and intense vigilance - from a certain angle I could observe all the keyboards - the system worked well but imposed an excessive strain on the nerves and temper of the teacher... Thus the day's work began with thirty-two

Precentors were also active in the Scottish choral movement initiated by Josef Mainzer who had a spectacular career in Edinburgh in the early 1840's and later in *The Association for the Revival of Sacred Music in Scotland.* Founded in 1845, the Association seems to have been the brainchild of Lord Murray - a judge of the Outer House of the Courts of Session who managed to enrol such people as Queen Victoria and Prince Albert (Patrons), the Dukes of Sutherland (President) and Argyll (Vice-President) as supporters and Mainzer as Musical Director.[8] The Association aimed to provide a general musical education as can be seen from the programme (which included folk songs) of two public meetings held in the Music Hall, George Street on Tuesday 9th March 1845 under Mainzer's leadership.

Various classes in music were offered in a house in York Place, the accommodation of which proved inadequate - a plan to add a schoolroom at the back fell through - and then in the 'large elegant' St Cecilia's Hall, Charlotte Place (about which there is a surprising lack of information) from 1851. The Association was not only tenant of this new St Cecilia's Hall but was also a shareholder. One can only surmise that the finances of the Association were not up to such ambitious surroundings; even in 1851 there was an ominous note in the Report of the Association drawing attention to the fact that funds were not sufficient to meet annual expenses. Despite or because of the introduction of 'no gratuitous instruction' the Association does not appear to have survived much beyond the early 1850s.

Some of the Associations decisions must have contributed to its demise. It seems highly unlikely that local professional musicians were consulted about the decision to publish psalm settings by Chevalier Sigismund Neukomm on the model of Bernadetto Marcello. Neukomm was a friend of Mainzer so it is possible that the commission was awarded only on the latter's recommendation.

> and twice weekly, with forty-eight pupils, before proceeding to other ladies' schools, private tuition and constant public appearances

A. Mackenzie, *A Musician's Narrative,* quoted in *Musical Times,* June 1935, p500.

[8] *The Music Herald* claimed that Mainzer actually founded the Association:

> Disappointed in the Professorship, Mainzer founded an "Association for the Revival of Sacred Music in Scotland"; brought out "The Standard Psalmody of Scotland"; trained the school children and held adult classes.

The Music Herald, 01 06 1895, p166. There is nothing in the records to suggest that this was the case though as Director of Music, Mainzer would have surely contributed to the Association's policy making.

The rash exercise to set all the psalms seems to have collapsed after the first six of the *Twenty Psalms* were printed in 1853. Only one, seemingly rather poor, performance of *Psalm 23*[9] seems to have taken place in Edinburgh which cannot have done much for sales:

> Psalm 23 was first performed in St Cecilia's Hall (in Edinburgh) by the pupils of the Association's National Singing School assisted by a considerable number of amateurs .... still more convincing proved the performance of the psalm in St Martin's Hall [London] by a powerful and rich-toned chorus of nearly 400 pupils of Mr Hullah's under the direction of their able and zealous master.[10]

Since the only other performances to which the Association could refer were those of the Rev Dr Cumming who 'has successfully introduced these Psalms for Divine worship in his Chapel, Little Russell Street, Covent Garden London'[11] it may be that Scottish musicians either ignored or boycotted these very undistinguished compositions. They could hardly be blamed for so doing.

Not only were the Precentors inspired by choral directors like Mainzer but they felt they could do just as well and, off their own bat, they formed large singing classes which occasionally developed into Choral Unions, as happened in Aberdeen[12] for example. Paradoxically it was probably the precentors who precipitated the organ movement in Scotland through using the organs in the Town Halls to accompany their choral classes. Perhaps the increased production of harmonised psalters[13] and hymn books were more directed at these classes than at church use; but having organ accompaniments at the choral class and being deprived of instrumental support in the church must have struck everybody as nonsensical. This situation was to become even more ridiculuous when popular 19th-century evangelists used instruments in their missions:

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9 See Appendix p290.

10 'Introduction' to presentation copy of the *Psalms*.

11 *Ibid.*

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> The musical progenitor of the Aberdeen Choral Union took shape at a meeting of parties interested in congregational praise held in Sinclair's (formerly Meston's Hall) Union Street on 1st September 1855. A general class in psalmody started under the direction of Mr Carnie. Two months later it gave a performance of sacred music in the East Parish Church. One hundred and sixty ladies and gentleman have agreed to form a choir for the purpose of illustrating various styles of sacred music.

J. Pratt, *The Book of the Aberdeen Choral Union 1858-1908*, p19.

13 It is claimed that 72,000 copies of Cairnie's *The Northern Psalter* were sold.
D.Welch, 'Some developments in NE Scotland', *Journal of the BIOS*, No.24 , p96.

> ...services were orchestrated for maximum emotional appeal and special emphasis was given to the use of music. Ira Sankey made the harmonium so popular that it led to pleas in the 1870s by working-class mission congregations for the introduction of instrumental music.[14]

Some indication of the respect in which the precentors were held is demonstrated by the affectionate nature of the hand-over arrangements in many churches when an organ was installed. Precentors often demitted office to generous tributes like the following :

> The [St Machar's Cathedral, Aberdeen] Kirk Session in view of the appointment of Mr Townshend [as first organist] and Mr Robertson the precentor being thereby set free from his offical connection with them in terms of minutes of date 3rd November 1890 resolved again to record their high sense of the long and faithful services Mr Robertson had rendered to the congregation and especially of the harmony he had preserved in the choir and the state of efficiency to which he had brought the choir and was now handing over to his successor.[15]

The obituaries of two of the very greatest precentors, Walter Strang and Walter Hately, are even more fulsome. Again something that might be expected, a singer's relationship with his audience is one of the most intimate in all music, and a fine voice coupled to high musicianship must have left an indelible impression on congregations:

> In the year 1848 St George's [Free Church, Edinburgh] was in search of a leader of their Psalmody and from many candidates the voice of Mr Strang was chosen. And for these many years down to 1885 he occupied with the greatest acceptance the position of leader of praise of the congregation. But not only in this capacity did we appreciate him - he was a most loveable man - modest and unassuming, but always ready to bear his part and latterly as one of the elders to discharge faithfully the duties belonging to that sacred office. His love and admiration for Dr Candlish were unbounded; the writer of these lines well remembered how he used to speak of his meeting with him on Sunday mornings and before Service to select the tunes to be sung and then to listen with reverence to the prayer which followed - the paraphrase and the explanation [? not clear in text] of the psalm sung. The death of Walter Strang severs a link which, so to

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[14] T. M. Devine, *Op. Cit.*, p378.
[15] *St Machar's Cathedral Minutes*, 30 11 1891.

> speak, bound together the old and the new rendering of the praise of St George's, and if in these later days with the accompaniment of the organ the rendering is grander, many among us remember the silver tones of that voice which sounded so sweetly, and we cannot doubt that now they help to swell the acclaim of praise in the Upper Sanctuaries.[16]

Hately's obituary notes his continental musical training - some of the most gifted Scottish young musicians gravitated to Germany - his work in both the Church of Scotland and Free Church Teacher Training Colleges where he was considered by his 'professional brethren an eminent trainer of teachers'. As a composer Hately's tune *St Helens* [set to *Be still, my soul;* in the Church Hymnary] was considered especially fine by his obituarist in St George's Free, Edinburgh, Mr W. D. Smart.

And how many church musicians over the years would have prompted their ministers to the following?

> In the words of Dr Whyte, Mr Hately was "a scholarly, a cultivated and a refined Christian gentleman, full of Christian humility, Christian meekness, Christian reverence and Christian sweetness of mind and heart and by his transparent simplicity and sincerity he was held in much esteem by all who knew him".[17]

The St George's Free Church, Edinburgh congregation was possibly the most committed to musical excellence in post-Disruption 19th-century Scotland. Its first minister, Dr Candlish, had been appointed a successor to Thomson at the "established" St George's and became one of the leading figures at the Disruption. With the help of the talented Strang, Candlish was no doubt anxious to continue the high standards established by Thomson and Smith in his new church. Perhaps happily, Candlish was to be spared the irony of seeing St George's Free achieving its greatest musical distinction and prestige as a result of the installation of an organ - the instrument he so mistrusted - though as a pragmatist much more concerned with church union than musical matters he may well have accepted the inevitable with a good grace. The introduction of the organ to St George's Free in 1897 was the responsibility - quite probably at the initiative as well - of the Rev Hugh Black, not the congregation.

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16 *St George's Free Church, Edinburgh Minutes*, 20 06 1898.
17 *Ibid.*, 15 03 1907.

Black seems to have been a latter day Rev Andrew Thomson in his desire to "have the best and to have it now". Like Professor Bruce[18] he must have been aware that the music in St George's lacked vitality and that an organ was urgently needed to rejuvenate matters.

There had been already some disquiet about the necessity to have paid singers in the choir in 1895,[19] so Black's achievement in persuading the church to instal an organ so soon afterwards must have been considerable. His leadership skills were clearly critical:

> The Moderator after welcoming the new members in the name of the Session explained that this was a special meeting to consider a proposal to introduce an organ into the church for public worship. The Moderator, Dr Black, having briefly introduced the special business, Mr Howden addressed the meeting concluding with the following motion The Session approve of the proposal to introduce an organ into Public Worship to request the Clerk to communicate their resolution to the Deacons requesting them to nominate a committee to carry out the necessary arrangements.[20]

One suspects that the ensuing 'considerable discussion' in which 'most members took part' may have been a little heated because six members, including the Earl of Moray, dissented from the resolution. Others may well have entertained reservations as well but accepted that the introduction of an organ was probably "inevitable" and that it would be politic to face up to reality sooner rather than later. Certainly the embarrassments caused by the well-documented goings on in North Leith[21] were something that all sections of the Session probably wished to avoid.

If left to its own devices, the Committee set up to advertise and appoint a new organist may well have offered the "going rate" salary and waited to see what the response was. Perhaps because he thought an inexperienced committee was not likely to make an imaginative appointment, Black pre-empted any unfortunate

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[18] See page 67.

[19]

> Dr Black as convenor of the Committee than made a verbal statement of the circumstances which had recently led to the introduction of eight salaried members in the choir and submitted in writing the finding arrived at by the committee on Friday 28th as follows: 'while regretting the necessity of the arrangement described by the convenor, regarding it as a merely temporary expedient, the Psalmody Committee respectfully request the Kirk Session to sanction its continuation for the present.

Ibid., 31 10 1894.

[20] *Ibid.*, 27 04 1896.

[21] One of the hurts suffered by Hamilton during his time at North Leith was the correspondence about his playing in the *Leith Herald*.

decisions by personally going to Norwood to persuade the brilliant blind organist, Alfred Hollins, to become the church's first organist.

Hollins was not the first English Organist to relocate in Scotland. The great Albert Lister Peace (1844-1912) had made the move some years previously and had prospered greatly. Other organists who could have been expected to make very satisfactory careers in England also came north, among them Allan Paterson (whose early CV included being Assistant Organist at Hereford (1884) and Organist at St Michael's College, Tenbury (1887) - surely promising a cathedral appointment in the fulness of time - to Govan Parish Church (1895) and to St John's Greenock (1899). In the Episcopal Church some potential high flyers like Thomas Collinson and George Pattman came to Scotland. Thomas Collinson had actually been encouraged to apply for the Assistant Organistship at St Paul's Cathedral, London, with the expectation that both it, and, in due season, the senior post would become his (as was to happen for both Martin and Macpherson) but he opted instead to wait for the post at the then still incomplete St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, Edinburgh 'where he could build things up from scratch'.[22] The energetic Pattman was organist of St Mary's Episcopal Church (later Cathedral), Glasgow (1904-16) and was a leading enthusiast for choral festivals in the Glasgow Episcopal Diocese. He later achieved lasting notoriety by having Harrison and Harrison build him a very expensive (£3,000) and very heavy (10 tons) four manual organ which he took round the Music Halls for several years! (It is now in the Chapel of Durham School.)

At this interval of time it is difficult to be absolutely sure of the factors which led distinguished musicians to move over the Border. Perhaps it was the greater opportunities for private and school teaching (a lot of the most able organists had school appointments - for example William Prendergast of St Paul's Episcopal Church, Edinburgh (later Winchester Cathedral) was Music Master at Edinburgh's Royal Blind Asylum and Fettes College) while in some cases possibly a performance career beckoned. Peace 'opened the majority of organs in Scotland'[23] in the latter years of the 19th century and St Machar's Cathedral, Aberdeen had a tradition of recitals and broadcasts long before John B Dalby moved from St Bartholomew's, Leeds just before World War II, reputedly because of its weekly broadcast organ recitals. It may have been the lure of more or less brand new instruments, generally better pay for less onerous duties and a missionary zeal on the part of enterprising

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[22] T. Collinson, *The Diary of an Organist's Apprentice*, p94.
[23] J. Love, *Op. Cit.*, p225.

organists to take their art to a musically emerging society. Some organists may also have seen an opportunity to "jump the queue" and get a better salary and instrument sooner than if they had stayed in the south - surely at least part of the motivation for Warren Clemens to go to Queen's Cross Free, Aberdeen in 1901, for example:

> Clemens was only 20 when he was chosen from 47 applicants and he was to have several major influences on the development of music at Queen's Cross. First he strengthened and trained the choir rigorously, and thus the regular singing of anthems could be introduced, and secondly in 1912 he formed the Aberdeen Bach Society... In 1915, Clemens left Aberdeen to become the conductor of the Glasgow Choral Union. [24]

Nevertheless Hollins, probably the most distinguished organist ever to make his career in Scotland, had difficulties balancing the 'pros and cons'[25] of accepting the invitation to go to St George's Free Church, Edinburgh in 1897. The attractions of the post were considerable: St George's was possibly 'the most famous Presbyterian church in the world'[26] and certainly the most celebrated "preaching station" in Scotland, it had a distinguished reputation for psalmody, the new organ was to be built by Hollins' preferred builder, Lewis, and the two ministers were liked and admired by Hollins - particularly Black who he had known for some time. Despite the 'greater opportunities' in this 'mighty church', 'the name Edinburgh people had for coldness and aloofness', and his own experience that 'East-windy, West-endy' was not an 'inaccurate description of the grey city and its people.'[27] made him initially hesitate. Apart from the proffered salary of £120 which was much higher than the "going rate" of £50-£60 at important city churches (smaller churches offered

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[24] G. Atkinson, *Reflections on the History of Music-Making in Queen's Cross Church.*

[25] Hollins was frequently called to advise on organ design in Scotland even before he moved to Edinburgh:

> Howden introduced me both to Hugh Black and to McKean and told the latter that when an organ was wanted for the new church he could not do better than go to me for advice. In due time McKean consulted me, and I showed him my organ at St Andrew's Upper Norwood. Lewis was then given an order for Sherwood. I drew up the specification, and opened the new organ in April 1893.
>
> [When established in Edinburgh] I was asked to specify and open several new organs.

A. Hollins, *Op. Cit.*, p99 and p231.
It would be a pretty unique event in the annals of 19th-century organ building if Hollins was not rewarded by organ builders even for testimonials.

[26] *Ibid.*, p219.

[27] *Ibid.*, p215.

salaries between £12 and £15) or even of the £80[28] paid by St Paul's Episcopal Church to Prendergast and to his successor Lee Ashton, one of the elements in his calculations which may well have led him to accept the appointment was the recent departure of Peace to St George's Hall, Liverpool (1897), which promised to give Hollins, 'this excellent artist, much occupation' in the opening of new organs presented to the churches by Andrew Carnegie.[29] At that time the going consultancy fee for a new organ could be as much as 10% of the final cost in the case of smaller instruments[30] - even one or two contracts a year would be a very welcome addition to Hollins' finances. To put Hollins' reluctance into context it would be difficult to imagine an organist hesitating for a moment on being offered a similar package at a major London church.

Hollins also made regular concert tours and it may be that the Ministers and Session had made it clear they would be supportive and understanding over the inevitable lengthy absences involved in making trips to, for example, the USA and South Africa. (There are no comments, either positive or negative, in the Minutes about Hollins' absences.) Having made the move it was surely the appreciative and supportive clergy, the singing of the huge congregations and his talented choir which kept him at the St George's console for nearly 50 years.

Hollins often chose the praise items himself, particularly when Black was preaching, though his colleague Whyte was more prescriptive - 'You may not care for these this morning, but please give us them, and I think you'll find they make a complete thing'.[31] They only regular disappointment in St George's was the lack of support the congregation gave the Music Association (which provided the Sunday Choir) for its annual March performance of a new oratorio or cantata. But then Hollins would not have been the first or last Scottish organist to think that the loyal work of the choir week by week should be rewarded by a rally-round at its annual concert!

A musician of Hollins' superlative improvisatory gifts would have found many opportunities to reharmonise and develop the music of the hymns. To later tastes his accompaniments were indeed 'fancy'[32] but not at the expense of devotional

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[28] *St Paul's Episcopal Church Minutes* record £80 being the Organist's annual salary during Prendergast's career at the church from 1891 to 1902, though in 1899 he did receive a bonus of £10!
[29] *Musical Times*, October 1901.
[30] 10% of the contract price 'was customary for standard instruments ... costing £200 to £300. N. Thistlethwaite, 'Liverpool 1855: Beginning or End?' *Organist's Review*, August 1983.
[31] A. Hollins, *Op. Cit.*, p235.
[32] D. Murray, (organist emeritus St Machar's Cathedral, Aberdeen) - personal recollection.

impact or 'grandeur' as Strang's Obituary has it. In 1928 such flexibility was greatly admired by no less than the famous organist and author, Harvey Grace. Commenting on Hollins' superb playing he commented that:

> It has to be recognised, of course, that Hollins' dexterous registration is a factor. Standing at his side, one is lost in admiration - at the uncanny ease and certainty with which he maintains a constant variety.
>
> In facility and subtlety of registration, Hollins reminded me of Lynnwood Farnam [one of the most famous of all organ recitalists]. It is evident that both regard registration as a branch of organ technique to be studied for its own sake.[33]

At Hollins' very first service in St George's in October 1897 it had 'not occurred to him to ask 'whether or not he was to play a voluntary so he 'opened with Hopkins' beautiful *Adagio Cantabile* in D', and during the offering played *O rest in the Lord* [Mendelssohn]. He also played something well known for the closing voluntary'. The semantics of 'not occurred to him' are interesting. Not only a becoming deference to local sensibilities but a statement of what Hollins considered his prerogative are equally valid interpretations. Indeed all is known of Hollins' independence and courageous handling of his blindness suggests that if there had been any complaints or prohibitions placed on his voluntary playing, St George's would have been quickly on the market for a new organist. Those at Hollins' first service who might have been offended by the opening voluntary, however, would surely have been disarmed when the congregation 'sang the familiar hymn tunes so heartily that the organ was swamped'.[34]

A report of a service played by Hollins in St George's a few years later reveals the change in Scottish Presbyterian worship wrought by the organ and players of Hollins' stature:

> A Sunday morning in June. The place, Edinburgh. Many dwellers in Auld Reekie are making their way up the steps of United Free St George's Church to the 'forenoon diet of worship'. A few minutes before the hour of eleven, Mr Hollins begins to play on the organ the *Adagio cantabile* in D of his old master and friend, Dr Hopkins. The choir - consisting of about 30 voices, of whom four[35] are remunerated for their services --are

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[33] H. Grace, 'A talk with Alfred Hollins' *Musical Times*, September 1928, p798.
[34] A. Hollins, *Op. Cit.*, p228.
[35] The *St George's Minutes* note 8 being originally appointed.

> taking their places on chairs round the organ console. By the time the minister, the Rev. Hugh Black (colleague of the Rev. Dr Whyte), appears, the spacious sanctuary is filled with a congregation of which any minister and organist might be proud. Psalm 46 - in the metrical version, so dear to the hearts of Scotch folk, although made by an Englishman! is sung to the old tune 'Stroudwater' and at a speed that may be described as 'measured beat and slow.' The effect of the congregational song is distinctly impressive in its solemnity and depth of feeling. The next 'exercise in praise' is a 'children's hymn' - a setting by Sir John Stainer of the words 'Whither, pilgrims, are you going?' in which the question is assigned to all the tenors and basses (in unison) and the answer is sung by all the voices, even by the children of older growth. Some of the worshippers who have 'gone before' would have rubbed their eyes (or their ears) if they could have heard Smart's Te Deum in F sung in this church - a stronghold of psalm-singing; but the rendering of this fine canticle has no effect upon the foundations of the building, and probably not upon the fundamentals of the Westminster Confession! It is sung, let us add, at a dignified pace, with a decided gain to its devotional utterance. The remaining hymns are 'For all the saints, who from their labours rest' (to Barnby's tune) and 'Lead us, Heavenly Father, lead us' to the familiar and beautiful setting by Hopkins. While the first offertory (there are two collections!) is being 'taken up,' Mr. Hollins plays his own Intermezzo in D flat, and the concluding voluntary is Handel's 'Fixed in His everlasting seat' from Samson'. To criticise acts of divine worship is unseemly; but this may be said - in his organ accompaniments Mr Hollins proves that he has discovered the secret springs of an artistic aid to devotion that is heartfelt and inspiring to those whose worship-song he so ably and sympathetically leads. Moreover his training of the choir shows that he has high ideals in his church work.[36]

The only concessions to Scottish traditions in St George's would seem to have been the opening psalm and the, possibly, slower than normal English tempos which Hollins adopted. If Hollins' treatment of hymns was anything like either those suggested by A Madeley Richardson (1868-1949) in *Modern Organ Accompaniment* (1907) or the 'free harmonisations' of Edward Bairstow (1874-1946) and others, a 'measured beat and slow' would be necessary for even a master player - Scottish or English - to get all the detail in. Otherwise the music has decided "theatrical" (Whither, pilgrims are you going?) and "Your Hundred Best Tunes" (Handel's 'Samson') overtones. Clearly Free St George's had happily embraced the full implications of having an organ when it unceremoniously dumped fifty-three years

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36 'Alfred Hollins', *Musical Times*, October 1901.

of traditional psalmody for radically different contemporary worship material. The whimsical tone of the article - 'no effect upon the foundations of the building, and probably not upon the fundamentals of the Westminster Confession' suggests that the writer felt the Scottish - hence musically reactionary? - congregation were nevertheless having to make a gigantic leap forward musically.

Alfred Hollins was a major star in 1901 (W T Best had called him 'Alfred the Great' as early as 1885) when he was still in his thirties, and it is inconceivable that other dynamic Scottish churches had not noted the "halo-effect" with which his abilities and prestige had enhanced an already world-famous charge. Despite the traumas at places like North Leith, Edinburgh in the early 1880s, within a decade an organ (not necessarily a large and impressive one - Hollins' St George's instrument was a modest two-manual) and, more importantly, a high quality organist were increasingly seen as assets to a forward-looking congregation. Queen's Cross Free Church, Aberdeen, for example, had anticipated St George's by appointing a highly regarded professional English organist, R. B. Bateman, in 1889 who was to be succeeded by expert musicians like Clemens in 1901 and Swainson (later of Aberdeen University) in 1916. Swainson, a pupil of Sir Edward Bairstow, is credited with giving Aberdeen's music 'a position and reputation it has never enjoyed before'[37] which makes his initially somewhat shabby treatment by Aberdeen University hard to understand . His organ playing shared the vitality of his writing:

> Whenever an organist allows his playing to lack definition his congregation will call him to order by promptly beginning to drag. The reassertion of an alert time sense, with clear-cut playing, a judicious use of staccato and a fuller admixture of 4-ft. pitch will generally serve to provide the necessary readjustment.[38]

Queen's Cross already had a reputation for good music before its succession of able organists. The Session was clearly also prepared to go the extra mile to attract a highly talented organist like Swainson by making those improvements to its Willis instrument 'necessary in order to secure the services of a first-class organist.'[39]

Other churches supported fine musicians to run their music. The Minutes of Holy Trinity, St Andrews, for example, record the happy and productive period (1908-

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[37] G. Atkinson, *Op. Cit.*
[38] W.Swainson, 'The Organ in Church Service', *Manual of Church Praise*, p211.
[39] G. Atkinson, *Op. Cit.*

1921) when Herbert Wiseman was its organist. Indeed the Session was prepared to pay a hefty premium to keep Wiseman in post when he moved to Edinburgh:

> In view of Mr Herbert Wiseman having got an appointment in Edinburgh as Director of Musical Studies under the New Education Authority for Edinburgh Corporation it was agreed to raise his salary as Organist and Choirmaster from £100 to £120, the additional £20 being towards his travelling expenses.[40]

When it became clear that Wiseman could not continue to do both jobs he left to a generous tribute from the Session members which concluded with their:

> congratulations on the responsible position which he now occupies under the Edinburgh Education Authority along with their best wishes for his continued success in his profession and assure him that they will watch with interest his future career.[41]

The only organist working in Scotland with an international reputation to match that of Hollins was Albert Peace. Hollins greatly admired Peace, a player of extraordinary gifts though self-taught, who held a large number of Glasgow organ appointments between 1865 and 1897. Trinity Congregational Church 1865; the University 1870; St John's Episcopal Church 1873; Maxwell Parish Church 1875; Hillhead Parish Church 1876; St Andrew's Hall 1877 and finally Glasgow Cathedral in 1879. Peace was the first incumbent of five of these posts, (Trinity, University, Hillhead, St Andrew's Hall and Cathedral) which might indicate that he had a hand in the design of the organs. Like a modern professional footballer he may also have looked for better terms or a transfer at the end of each "season" in his church appointments. "Loyalty" would not appear to have been an overwhelming concern for Peace, yet he wrote a large amount of church music including music for the Anglican Offices, anthems and sixteen of his hymn tunes appeared in the *Scottish Hymnal* (1885) for which he was musical editor. He was also musical editor of *Psalms and Paraphrases with Tunes* (1886), *The Psalter with Chants*, (1888) and the *Scottish Anthem Book* (1891). His career was the antithesis of Hollins' yet his energy and possible opportunism served the cause of the emerging Scottish organ very well.

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[40] *Holy Trinity, St Andrews Minutes, 1919* , Book 1 p64.
[41] *Ibid.*, August 1921, Book 2 p112.

Nevertheless some suggestion of casualness in his church work can be discerned in the following:

> Concerning the excellence of Peace's work at Glasgow Cathedral, testimony is all but unanimous, the only dissenting voice we ever heard eventually declaring that, as regards accompanying, Peace could "do it like an angel if he liked." Perhaps there were occasions when Peace did not like. Jupiter occasionally nods and Peace, after all, was but human. A man is not always up to the high-water mark of his abilities, and there are periods of musical drought as well as "times of refreshing." As a matter of fact Peace's accompaniments were what the amateur trombonist once believed the abbreviation *pp* to mean, - namely pretty powerful. He disliked effeminacy in choral accompaniment. ... Indeed as Peace became more and more of a solo organist he became increasingly intolerant of the alternations of sound and silence peculiar to a choral service. He longed for the greater continuity of a concert performance. "A church organist", he once remarked, "has no chance; he is like a street car always stopping to put off and take up passengers".

Not surprisingly once aboard the 'passengers' were bundled along rather unceremoniously:

> Another writer says that in his accompaniments, Dr Peace showed "freedom and resource, but avoided everything *outré*. What one notices more than all at the [Glasgow] Cathedral service is the strongly-marked time and the thunderous pedalling. The congregation, as they [the pedals] tread out the harmonies of the tunes, march upon a firm basis of pedal organ, and move with a swing that must stir the sense of time in the most sluggish singer. The pedalling is often semi-staccato, and measures out the pulses like the double-bass in the orchestra"[42]

Led by a virtuoso like Hollins or Peace at the organ, congregational singing must have been an electrifying experience for those only familiar with unaccompanied psalmody and hymns. One suspects that in the early days of the Scottish organ, few congregations would have players of this quality to accompany them . St George's Parish, under Thomson and its Free Church successor under Whyte and Black, was

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[42] O. Mansfield, 'Albert Lister Peace; an Appraisal and an Appreciation', *The Organ Vol V*, No.20, p227.

probably one of the very few[43] Scottish Churches - Presbyterian or Anglican - which were able to make achieving musical excellence in services a deliberate and consistent policy.

While churches enjoying high standards were still probably the exception rather than the rule at the turn of the century, there had been clearly more good will towards improvements in congregational music based on the organ for longer than is perhaps realised. This report comes from 1888 - well before St George's installed an organ and Carnegie donations accelerated the adoption of the instrument:

> ANSTRUTHER U[NITED] P[RESBYTERIAN] CHURCH AND INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC A Congregational meeting was held on Tuesday evening - Rev Mr Smith presiding - to consider the introduction of instrumental music into the services of the church. The chairman gave a short sketch of the different changes in the service of praise of the church for the last 38 years, and remarked that he did not know of any church where the improvement had not been favourably received. There was no doubt the use of an instrument in a church was a very desirable thing if used in a proper way. It was a help to the choir, and encouragement to the congregation. A motion was then made that the matter be gone into, and a show of hands indicated that all present were agreeable to the change. A committee was then appointed to go round the congregation and solicit subscriptions after which the meeting terminated.[44]

By World War I many Scottish congregations had good organs, thanks to Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919) whose attitude to church music was however somewhat ambivalent. Carnegie felt strongly that music was a refining influence on people and that organ music would do their souls more good than inadequate sermons:

> Believing from my own experience that it is salutary for the congregation to hear sacred music at intervals in the service and then slowly to disperse to the reverence-compelling organ after such sermons as often show us little of a Heavenly Father, I feel the money spent for organs is well spent. So we continue the organ department.[45]

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[43] As well as Queen's Cross, Aberdeen, St James' Church Paisley (which was supported by a branch of the Coats family) also took its music very seriously, employing gifted professionally trained organists and choirmasters like Dr William Rigby. D. M. Smith, *St James Church of Scotland*, p29 refers.

[44] *East of Fife Record*, 28 09 1888, p2. See also page 289

[45] A Carnegie, *Autobiography of Andrew Carnegie*, p279.

Carnegie was obviously less interested in hymnody and choral music than in organ music as such, but whatever his motives he eventually donated $6,248,311 to help procure 7,689 church organs worldwide and thus ensured the organ was to be the absolute pre-eminent church instrument. Scotland had 1005 grants out of a UK total of 3,375.[46]

Carnegie's love of music came about through a 'connection with the Swedenborgian Society':

> As an appendix to the hymn-book of that society there were short selections from the oratorios. I fastened instinctively upon these, and although denied much of a voice, yet credited with "expression", I was constant attendant upon choir practice. The leader, Mr Koethen, I have reason to believe, often pardoned the discords I produced in the choir because of my enthusiasm in the cause. When, at a later date, I became acquainted with the oratorios in full, it was a pleasure to find that several of those considered in musical circles as the gems of Handel's musical compositions were the ones that I as an ignorant boy had chosen as favorites. So the beginning of my musical education dates from the small choir in the Swendenborgian Society of Pittsburgh.[47]

The first recipient of an organ from Carnegie, the Allegheny Swedenborgians, had every reason to congratulate themselves on their Society's early encouragement of his musical interests:

> My giving of organs came very early in my career, I having presented to less than a hundred members of the Swedenborgian church in Allegheny, which my father favored, an organ, after having declined to contribute to the building of a new church for so few.[48]

One wonders if Liverpool's Anglican Cathedral ever regrets not having found a place in its choir for the young Paul McCartney![49]

Among UK organists there used to be a belief that far from raising the quality of music in churches, "Carnegie organs" were all too often bigger than required and frequently built by poor quality builders. In the present writer's youth "Carnegie

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46 S. North, *A Manual of Public Benefactions of Andrew Carnegie*, p320.
47 A. Carnegie, *Op. Cit.*, p51.
48 *Ibid.*, p278.
49 Paul McCartney was an unsuccessful Choirboy auditionee at Liverpool Anglican Cathedral.

organ" was frequently used as a term of disparagement. Carnegie, through his secretary James Bartram, would not pay more than half of the cost of an organ however,[50] and he also reserved the right to question whether an instrument was suitable in size for a particular building or congregation. A further incentive to ensure quality was the warning that if the organ was not properly installed Carnegie's payment would be withheld![51]

The fact that many leading English firms did well out of the Carnegie "organ rush" at the turn of the century indicates that many Scottish churches were well aware of quality. Some of these firms - Willis, Norman and Beard, T C Lewis, William Hill for example - were also in financial difficulties[52] in the years leading up to and including the First World War, and Carnegie grants no doubt helped prevent them from collapsing.

One of Scotland's finest organs - that in St Paul's and St George's Episcopal Church, Edinburgh is striking testimony to the excellence encouraged by Carnegie grants. Early in 1904 the church's Rector, Canon Rowland Ellis, [later Bishop of Aberdeen] had asked the organist, Lee Ashton, to go 'thoroughly into the matter and let him know what sum would be required to get the organ (by David and Thomas Hamilton) into really good condition'. Lee Ashton prudently asked Thomas Collinson [of St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral] to inspect the organ as he thought the vestry might like another report besides his own - a percipient move for which he must later have been very grateful.

Lee Ashton found that to discard 'nothing that may with advantage be retained and to retain nothing that should be discarded ... a sum of £400 would be necessary to produce a thoroughly sound serviceable instrument.' Collinson, on the contrary,

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[50] Possibly, however, Carnegie did make an exception and cover the entire costs for the 1904 Willis organ in St Salvator's Chapel during his time as Rector of St Andrews University:

> This day we use for the first time for its sacred purpose the noble organ which our Rector has gifted to us.

Order of service for the dedication of the University Chapel, 16 10 1904. A similar wording was also used to describe the Carnegie organ benefaction to Glasgow University.

[51] The Organ Correspondence now held by Columbia University, New York reveals that a careful check was kept on the installation of organs paid for by Carnegie. See Appendix p270.

[52] Henry Willis I left the firm in considerable debt and if it had not been for the Liverpool and Westminster Cathedral contracts the firm may well have gone under. T. C. Lewis was bankrolled for a time by Courage the Brewers but eventually was taken over (by Willis who transferred to the Lewis works in Brixton). The Willis firm is no longer in family hands. William Hill and Norman and Beard amalgamated and survived until 1998.

thought that 'the only possible cure was the radical one of a new organ of not less than £1000' and it was his advice that prevailed. Lee Ashton was given permission to go to Durham to discuss matters with Arthur Harrison,[53] at the tender age of 35 already the foremost UK organ builder. An organ costing £945 was specified (needless to say "extras" later brought the contract to over £1,000) and was installed in 1906. Had the Rector not been able to announce that Carnegie had agreed to pay £500 towards the cost of the instrument it is likely that the Vestry, which had been shaken by the 'considerably larger than they had anticipated'[54] Harrison and Harrison estimate, would have happily taken Ashton's rather than Collinson's advice.

In our conservationist age it is even possible to find champions for "Carnegie" builders of considerably more modest attainments than Harrison or Willis, such as Miller[55] of Dundee and Lawton of Aberdeen who built up healthy connections at the turn of the century - the latter even exporting organs to 'Central and South Africa and later to New Zealand'.[56] The fact that many of these firm's organs are still working reasonably - there is a Miller (1897) in St James the Great Episcopal Church, Cupar, and a Lawton (1904) in Bervie Parish, known to the present writer, for example - proves at least the lasting quality of their mechanisms if not necessarily their musicality.[57]

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[53] When he was articled to Dr Philip Armes at Durham Cathedral, Collinson had taught Arthur Harrison the piano.

[54] *St Paul's Episcopal Church Minutes*, 1904.

[55] A. Pow, *Organists' Review*, November 1997.

[56] J. Norman, 'Review' of P. G .Wright, *E H Lawton - A Chapter in Scottish Organ Building Organists' Review*, October 1973, p28.

[57] While it is impossible to be dogmatic, Scottish figures also seem to suggest that quotations for "Carnegie Organs" in 1914 from leading English provincial builders such as Binns and Norman and Beard were on par with local builders like Ingram and Hilsdon:

Carnegie Organs

Church	**Builder**	**size**	**cost**
Woodside Parish, Aberdeen	Binns	2/16	£325
Gardner Memorial, Brechin	Binns	2/10	£200
Juniper Green UF, Edinburgh	Hilsdon	2/18	£300
St Michael's Episcopal, Glasgow	Norman and Beard	2/14	£200
Battlefield Parish, Glasgow	Ingram	2/27	£300
Auchingramont UF, Hamilton	Ingram	2/15	£250

Doubts about the benefits of the precipitate installation of organs in the Scottish churches soon emerged however. Even the sympathetic Wauchope Stewart could write in 1914:

> In other directions we see in our church music evidence of the fact that the changed conditions have not come about by gradual growth from within, but by the sudden opening up to us of a new territory in which our people do not yet find themselves at home. We have the musical material at our disposal, but we have not grown up in the tradition which would enable us to use it to the best advantage. Take the case of instrumental music as an example. Through the munificence of Mr Carnegie organs are now to be found throughout the length and breadth of the land. His liberality presents to us a challenge not unlike that of the Ranshaketh: "I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them". We have the horses, but can we provide the riders? We have the organs, but do we know how to use them? In many cases the organ is simply a white elephant. The congregations cannot afford to pay a salary sufficient to procure an efficient organist. And even if they could, the supply of competent musicians is limited. The organ is such a novelty in Scotland that we have not had time for a generation of organists to grow up all over the country. In rural districts the organists must still be imported, and that is an expensive procedure. Doubtless this difficulty will right itself in time. Organs are so common nowadays that players will soon multiply. But have we the traditions of sound organ playing firmly established for them to grow up under? Is there not a sad lack of the true ecclesiastical atmosphere in much of the organ playing that we have at present in our churches? We labour under the disadvantage of having gained an important adjunct to Christian praise without having inherited the tradition that has gathered round it.[58]

South Beach UF, Saltcoats	Binns	2/14	£150
Fairbairn UF, Bridgeton	Ingram	2/15	£365

From the above *new* organs and assuming a consistent 50% grant the price per stop was as follows:

Binns	£32
Hilsdon	£32
Ingram	£32
Norman and Beard	£30

Allowing for the intricacy or otherwise of the casework, different specifications, compasses and so-on these figures suggest little difference in prices between the established Scottish and leading English Provincial builders. Information from *Report for 1914 The Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, An Interim List of Scottish Organs* and *Edinburgh Organs.*

[58] G. Wauchope Stewart, *Op. Cit.*, p199.

Peace, who had done very well indeed out of the Carnegie organ (he had opened a great number of them), was also unconvinced about the benefits of the organ revolution:

> To one interviewer he pessimistically asserted that having given three hundred organ recitals in and around Glasow "organ playing in itself remained powerless to attract an audience." "I declare" said he, "that one might as well be organist to the Necropolis so far as any good had been done in this direction. Of course, there are the select few who really understand and like the instrument, but the many would rather hear a concertina or something of that sort".[59]

Against a background of a shortage of organists and doubts about the wisdom of the whole scheme, it is not surprising that at the first opportunity Carnegie's Trustees re-appraised organ grants. Carnegie, it will be recalled, once he had set up a trust, always left decisions to the Trustees:

> "Well,' I said, "Mr Balfour, I have never known of a body of men capable of legislating for the generation ahead, and in some cases those who attempt to legislate for their own generation are not thought to be eminently successful".[60]

So when financial pressures[61] precipitated a hard look at organ grants by the now independent Dunfermline UK Carnegie Trust, its Director, David Stephen underlined his sympathy with the pessimism of Wauchope Stewart and Peace by looking for new areas of musical endeavour in musical education and scholarship.[62]

The Carnegie Dunfermline Trust's latter day indifference to organs is disappointing if understandable. Scotland was seriously "overchurched" and while the more musically ambitious Established and Free Churches encouraged quality organists to

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[59] O. Mansfield, *Op. Cit.*, p230.

[60] A. Carnegie, *Op. Cit.*, p270.

[61] In a letter to the present writer, dated 05 11 1999, Elizabeth East, Trust Administrator, explained that part of the motivation to move into new areas was the sheer volume of applications:

> Until the setting up of this Trust [The Carnegie United Kingdom Trust] in 1913, all grants for church organs were made from Mr Carnegie's private funds administered by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. When this Trust took over the policy, Trustees were concerned at the number of application they were sent (in the first year they received 1,300!). They decided, therefore, to close the policy and concentrate on new areas to support.

[62] The Carnegie Trust partly underwrote an important Tudor Music series and supported the composer Herbert Howells as well as creating a School of Music which numbers Iain Whyte among its *alumni.*

seek employment in Scotland, too often one reads of a new organ being played for no remuneration at all, as in Kirkwall United Presbyterian Church where:

> ... a relay of young ladies - members of the congregation - took in turn their place at the harmonium. And all this was done gratuitously and with a will.[63]

Leaving expensive equipment in the care of amateurs has never been a recipe for high standards. Not that the mobility[64] of the more able organists and their reluctance to teach - even the "sedentary" Hollins 'soon found it necessary to give up teaching'[65] could have assisted in the building up of traditions of organ-playing excellence in the churches. Admittedly English Organists in the course of an ecclesiastical career needed to move from one church to another but at least in the Church of England there was a clear promotion path - minor to major Parish Church then to Cathedral. No-one would be surprised to lose an organist to promotion but jumping at whim from one Scottish parish to another similar one must have led to resentment on the part of congregations. This lack of continuity and commitment from professional organists would have been yet another aspect discouraging able young Scottish people from taking up the instrument. It is hardly surprising that neither St Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh nor Glasgow Cathedral appears to have ever had a Scottish musician as Organist and Choirmaster[66] since there has never been for young people 'the traditions of sound organ playing firmly established for them to grow up under' as Wauchope Stewart feared. Possibly one of the saddest reflections on Carnegie's munificence is that an unwillingness to encourage, train and provide a career structure - *inter alia* university scholarships - for young organists in his home land has resulted in major Scottish church appointments routinely going to "foreigners".

United States Carnegie Grants for organs ceased in 1920. They were withdrawn with regret because of the 'abnormal conditions created by the recent war'. Unlike their Dunfermline counterparts, the Carnegie Corporation of New York Trustees were anxious to reassure the churches that 'this action did not involve in any sense a

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[63] D. Webster, *History of the United Presbyterian Congregation, Kirkwall*, p174

[64] Albert Peace's peregrinations have been noted, but Thomas Hewlett (1845-1874) in a tragically short career was organist of St Mary's Dalkeith (St Peter's Lutton Place), St Mary's Roman Catholic Church and Newington Parish Church.

[65] A. Hollins, *Op. Cit.*, p236

[66] Of the four leading church organ posts in Scotland, St Giles, Edinburgh, Glasgow Cathedral, Paisley Abbey and St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, Edinburgh only Paisley has a Scottish organist.

lessened interest in the cause of religion or of religious organisations'.[67] The large number of full time Organist and Choirmaster or Minister of Music posts and the variety of choirs still attached to many United States churches - everything from "Cherub" to "Chancel"- may suggest that the Carnegie organ grants were much more valuable and significant to the development of church music in America than they were to Scotland. Nevertheless the organ revolution in Scotland changed many people's perception of music, and through the organists the Churches provided the country with a sizeable and often expert cadre of musicians.

Whatever musical standards in those 19th-century churches with organs may have been like, and with whatever suspicion music other than hymns may have been regarded by congregations - as the next chapter explains - the leadership of the Church of Scotland responded to the challenge of encouraging and supporting excellence with vigour and some success for the next three-quarters of a century. In the 1950s and 1960s, for example, there was still a considerable number of highly gifted organists (mainly English admittedly) in Aberdeen church posts, who provided musical leadership in church, city, university, college, school and even further afield - John Dalby when at St Machar's Cathedral helped found the *National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain.* It would be surprising if this was not reflected elsewhere throughout Scotland.

The church may have been slightly nervous of music initially, but, through its forward-looking ministers, precentors and organists from the early 19th century to well past the middle of the 20th century - hopefully still, it has been crucial to the development of Scottish music.

Corporate Identity - choir dress and musical standards.

Musical excellence in a Scottish Church could result from a variety of happy circumstances - a determined minister, an able organist, supportful session and congregation and so on - but fortuitous circumstances could be pivotal, as the music in Paisley Abbey demonstrates.

Despite a distinguished history the Abbey's music was in some disarray when Alfred Hollins was establishing himself in St George's Free Church, Edinburgh, . A magnificent, very expensive (£2,000) and, no doubt awe-inspiring, Cavaillé-Coll

[67] The full text of the circular letter is given in the Appendix p274.

organ installed in 1872 had not prevented problems with the choir during Mrs Hoek Scott's tenure of the organistship from 1903-1907. In 1905 the Music Committee of the Session had to report with regret 'that a distinct want of harmony seems to exist between the organist and choir', noting in particular that 'the choir members do not always get the consideration that is due to a voluntary body.' Since nothing was done about the tensions in the choir for two years, the Session may have just thought that Mrs Hoek Scott was too demanding but that, given time, relationships would improve. Both the period allowed for reconciliation and the tone of the minutes suggest a much greater willingness to support an organist in difficult times than was ever extended at North Leith, Edinburgh, for which the Abbey Session should surely take credit. Nevertheless by January 1907 some of the congregation were very unhappy:

> There was read a letter from Mr Bow, Castlehead, stating that there existed a widespread feeling of dissatisfaction with the service of praise in the Abbey, and suggesting that the Session takes into consideration the appointment of a male certificated organist who might have the assistance of a paid quartette of vocalists.

Accordingly the Session decided:

> 1 that a certificated male organist be appointed.
>
> 2 that the Kirk Session adopt the principle of paid singers to assist the present choir.
>
> 3 that the Kirk Session appoint five of the members along with five of an advisory committee.[68]

In the same month the Session minutes announced the formation of a junior choir 'to make the fullest provision of work among the young and the Parish Mission':

> Dr Genticks reported that Mr Wilson, a member of the Choir, was willing to undertake the formation of a Juvenile Musical Association and that he (Dr Genticks) would be responsible for his salary of £15 p.a.

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[68] *Paisley Abbey Minutes,* January 1907.

Again the Session "welcoming" a Junior Choir rather than "demanding one", as at North Leith Church, Edinburgh, is a matter for congratulation though it is not clear from the Minutes if this Association ever materialised. Whether or not the Boys' Choir formed in 1907 had anything to do with the Juvenile Musical Association, from the former can be traced the the origins of the tradition of musical excellence in the Abbey.

The 'male certificated organist' which the Abbey appointed was John Finlay, who in the two years before his early death in 1909, as well as maintaining the full choir of 100 members 'made a speciality of the Boys' Choir which he brought to a great efficiency. He took a deep interest in the boys and conducted a Bible Class for them each Sunday.[69]

Some measure of the impact that Finlay made in his short career at Paisley Abbey is indicated by the fact that the Boys' Choir was kept on after his death. A list of Boys' Choir Rules as well as detailing the financial rewards offered the choristers and other minutiae includes the following:

> Boys are not allowed to appear at the services unless in Eton Suits.

Quite probably the present composition and musical orientation of the Abbey Choir can be traced to this seemingly minor matter of dress. What a choir wears is a substantial factor in creating a "corporate identity" as even a secular choir like Glasgow Orpheus Choir which wore gowns for its performances illustrates. The Rev W. H. Macleod recognised this fact in 1891 when he wanted church choirs to regard themselves as teams or 'guilds' complete with some distinctive insignia on their clothing:

> I should propose, for this end, the formation of a Choir Guild, under a definite Rule of Life with branches in parishes.[70]

Macleod may have been prepared to stretch 'badge' to full canonicals: Almond would certainly have done so with his choir at Loretto had it been at all practical:

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[69] A. Howell, *Op. Cit.*, p41.
[70] W. H. Macleod, 'Church music and Choirs', *Divine Life of the Church*, p224.

> ... in his love of brightness, the Head had suggested putting all the boys into surplices, and was only deterred by visions of washing bills.[71]

In buoyant pre-World War I Paisley, insisting that boys turn up in Eton Suits may have been practical, but one doubts very much that it could have remained so after 1918. In the less prosperous 1920s one imagines that the increasingly "cathedral" ambience of the Abbey as the new chancel emerged led to the scarlet cassocks and white surplices of 1921 on both economic and aesthetic grounds. The men and women of the choir were no doubt robed in 1928 to "complement" the boys.

The Paisley Choir was not the only choir to be robed to harmonise with a building or scheme of redecoration. Also in the 1920s the boys' choir at Govan was gowned by the Rev George Duncan as part of his vision:

> to realise what he called 'the Cathedral-like Parish Church as the centre of the spiritual life of the community. It was he who revived the Boys Choir, long since suspended and who clad them in their choristers' robes.[72]

Selby Wright started the Canongate Boys Choir in 1946 during the redecoration and re-ordering of the church. Walls were were knocked down, choir stalls put in, the building painted internally white and blue and the "make-over" completed with a large cassocked boys' choir.[73] Although the Canongate Boys were not especially good musicians, their choir does illustrate the effect on repertoire and attitudes if singers are robed [my underlining]:

> Not many were very good singers, but it meant they came to Church each Sunday, many both morning and evening - nor were they put off by not having "the right sort of clothes" for they processsed in scarlet cassocks, white ruffs and blue girdles and so were dressed all the same. The Choir helped too to make us a family, and it was especially noticeable at, for example, prayers at Camp, when for a time, under the leadership of Hugh Mackay, <u>we even sang Compline</u>.[74]

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71 H. B. Tristram, *Op. Cit.*, p139.

72 J. Macfarlane, *Outline History of Govan Old Parish Church,* p55.

73

> Three hundred years before that there had been "singing boys" in Canongate and at Holyrood. So we began with nineteen boys at first in purple cassocks lent from St Giles'; but soon these were changed to our scarlet cassocks as befitted a Royal Foundation. As the years went on the number of boys in scarlet cassocks increased to fifty-six.

R. Selby Wright *Op.Cit.*, p209.

74 *Ibid.*

Dressing up to sing possibly undistinguished choral works has been for many the start of a lifelong passion for church music. At Paisley the happy circumstance of a gifted boys' choir trainer, a wonderfully restored building and a magnificent organ started a tradition of excellence which is possibly unique in the Church of Scotland though another robed choir, that of Dunblane Cathedral, might contest this assertion! Quite probably Scottish Choral Music in general would be in a stronger position if more Church of Scotland congregations had robed their choirs.

Chapter 7

Pursuing excellence: musical leadership in the Church of Scotland.

Despite the inevitable limitations of a non-professional part-time group, the Psalmody and Hymns, later Aids to Devotion[1]*, Committee often provided good leadership in the era of the organ from the late 19th century onwards. In some areas it was handicapped by inexperience and lack of authority; in others it showed considerable deftness and imagination. In particular its promotion of anthems and choral singing encouraged many large and enthusiastic choirs which lasted well into the 1960s. Where major mistakes were discovered, such as the setting up of certificates and diplomas, the committee had the good sense to abandon the impracticable and explore more promising avenues.*

It was suggested in Chapter 3 that English church music survived the Reformation because of "centres of excellence". These had sufficient pull on the affections and loyalties of at least some in establishment and senior clerical circles that, after the Commonwealth, efforts were immediately made to revive the choirs of the Chapel Royal and of the major Cathedrals. Standards may have slumped over the succeeding centuries, but theoretically at least there was nothing preventing the able and determined from achieving high standards. A. H. Mann's teacher Zachariah Buck (1798-1879), for example, ran a famous choir in Norwich Cathedral from 1825- to 1872 during one of the more undistinguished periods in English church music history. Mann's own work at King's College Chapel, Cambridge must have been inspired in part by the excellence of Buck's voice training.

"Precept" never being as effective as "example", it is hardly surprising that the Psalmody and Hymns Committee had difficulty in fostering higher musical standards in the Church of Scotland when there were no exceptional choirs in Scottish University or Cathedral which the average choirmaster would wish to emulate. It can be taken as axiomatic that in any activity merely demanding higher standards - let alone threatening retribution if they are not achieved - rarely achieves much more than resentment and grudging aquiescence. In the absence of

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1 The Committee on Public Worship and Aids to Devotion combines the following Committees of the uniting Churches - The Committee on Psalmody and Hymns and the Committee on Aids to Devotion of the former Church of Scotland, and the Praise Committee and the "Book of Common Order" Committee of the United Free Church.

Reports of the General Assembly, 1930, p1155.

examples of what is required, even perfectly reasonable guidelines which are expressed too vigorously can alienate. The Committee quite understandably felt that if trainee ministers were properly taught they would appreciate the contribution music could make to the services over which they would preside in the future.

Following a major investigation into the state of church music in Scotland (discussed below) in 1905/6, in 1912 the General Assembly issued these rather brusque and prescriptive recommendations for Instruction in Church Music in the Divinity Halls :

> (a) That Divinity students should be encouraged to join Church Choirs; to make themselves acquainted with the materials of Church Praise authorised by the Church and the proper function of each; and to study the principles that guide in the selection of praise.
>
> (b) That students should be expected to submit a selection of Psalms, Paraphrases, and Hymns along with their homilies at the Divinity Halls, and also when appearing before the Presbyteries.
>
> (c) That students should be taught the law and practice of the Church in regard to the conduct of the musical portion of the service, and should be suitably advised in regard to the relation of the minister to the choir-master and the choir.
>
> (d) That lectures on Church Music should be given annually at each University.
>
> (e) That the Committee should be authorised to prepare a manual of Church Praise for the instruction primarily of Divinity students, which manual should contain a list of their authorised publications and suggested selections of praise.[2]

Whether or not the Divinity Halls, who had their own priorities and who were not greatly amenable to external direction anyway, ever took much more than passing notice of any of these recommendations is very much open to doubt. Be that as it may, the Psalms and Hymns Committee eventually had to admit defeat with as good a grace as it could muster - a report in 1926 certainly suggests that it realised

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[2] *Ibid.*, 1910, p608.

that not much progress was ever going to be made on that particular front. A face saving climbdown was therefore in order:

> Owing to the institution of Pastoral Institutes at the Divinity Halls, it was not found practicable to continue the lectures on the same lines as formerly [not that these were always held[3]]. The wardens were careful to see that the subject was not neglected and the thanks of the Committee are due to them, At Edinburgh and St Andrews[4] the lecturers were those appointed by our Committee, while at Glasgow arrangements had been made for instruction to be given by an organist who is an eminent authority on the subject, but the Committee understands that, owing to lack of time, this arrangement could not be implemented.[5]

The expressions 'not neglected' and 'lack of time' can be taken as fairly pointed comments on the urgency with which the Divinity Halls had responded to the Committee's recommendations.

If the encounter with the Divinity Halls proved a little unproductive, it has to be said that the Committee itself could be equally disinclined to take advice. Despite at least twelve respondents[6] to the Enquiry of 1905/6 recommending the appointment of Psalmody Instructors - "animateurs" in modern parlance - rather than Inspectors, the Committee was determined to press on with the latter. The eminent good sense in comments like this seemed to have fallen on deaf ears:

> I would strongly suggest the Committee should employ some teachers of singing - practical men with commonsense - and send them here and there over the country to hold congregational classes for the improvement of the singing.[7]

A more wordly-wise Committee would surely have foreseen that while organists and congregations might happily join together to sing new material under a visiting Psalmody Instructor, they might be less than enthralled at the prospect of their instrumental and vocal prowess being assessed in their own churches.

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[3] It was reported in 1915 that no lectures in music were given at St Andrews.
[4] As has been noted Frederick Sawyer's first "Job Specification "(1925) for the Organist and Lectureship in Music post at St Andrews included teaching Divinity Students. This was dropped in the second. One can only suppose that his services were declined by the Divinity Faculty.
[5] *Reports of the General Assembly*, 1926, p 629.
[6] *Ibid.*, 1908, p817.
[7] *Ibid.*

Admittedly there was apparently a precedent in 'former years' for Inspectors of Psalmody in the Church of Scotland and there is also some logic in the following less-than-lucid prose where Inspectors are seen as paving the way for Instructors:

> They believe that the services of trained musicians would be a great use in many cases, and would open the way for considerable improvement. They also believe that, with the experience gained by this means, the direct contact with the different localities which would result, and the practical advice of the musicians appointed by them, the Committee would be better able to consider the appointment of Psalmody Instructors.

Nevertheless there are signs that the Committee in their anxiety to "get things moving" had really not considered the matter of Inspectors versus Instructors carefully enough. Even at this early stage in the Committee's deliberations the absence of a well defined Psalmody Inspector "job specification", for example, must be seen as a serious misjudgement [my underlining]:

> They therefore recommend that the Committee be instructed to consider as to the appointment of musical inspectors, and as to the functions to be allotted to them, keeping in view the practice in former years in this respect, and to report fully on the subject.

The General Assembly also seems to have felt that the Committee was being a little precipitate, and while it did not turn down the request to approve the appointment of Musical Inspectors completely, the Committee was invited to 'reconsider' - a gentle rebuff at best. The original submission from the Psalmody and Hymnal Committee was:

> The General Assembly approve of the appointment of Musical Inspectors, as suggested in the Report, and instruct the Committee to consider this question, keeping in view the practice in former years in this respect, and to report fully on the subject.

The General Assembly re-worded it thus:

The General Assembly instruct the Committee to reconsider the subject of Musical Inspectors, and to report fully on the subject to next General Assembly.

The Committee does seem to have got its own way in the end, but only one Inspector ever seems to have been appointed (for Edinburgh in 1910) and his fate goes unrecorded.

The Committee's relationship with organists and choirmasters always seems to have been a little strained. While regularly expressing appreciation of their work, the Committee does not to seem to have won the hearts and minds of all organists and choirmasters. Not surprisingly many of these were particularly unenthusiastic at the prospect of inspections. The Edinburgh Correspondent of the *Musical Opinion* probably expressed a frequent reaction on the part of nervous and resentful organists:

> Organists will be in interested in this, and perhaps a little amused by it. They know too much about how the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland deals with such matters. Their Psalmody and Hymnal Committee are always composed chiefly of parsons, without a single professional musician to guide them; and the idea of such a committee issuing 'communications' for the 'benefit' of their choirs will appeal to the organists as - well highly grotesque. As regards the proposed inspectors, the question would seem to be, "Who is to inspect the inspectors?"[8]

The Church of England has from time to time issued reports about church music - most recently *In Tune with Heaven* (1992) - but has avoided getting too deeply involved in trying to improve matters itself, preferring to leave leadership to independent agencies like the Royal School of Church Music where organists and choirs can seek help and guidance on their own volition. Where local situations can vary so much, many organists and choirs are worried that they will be criticised unfairly if they are officially inspected. It is a far less daunting prospect for a conscientious organist and choirmaster to seek the help and advice of a friendly and independent musician, for example, knowing that any comments will only be reported back to him or her and will be neither retained nor passed on to anyone else.

Against a background of some antipathy from the organists, it was decidely unwise of the Committee to introduce diplomas and certificates. Setting up music examinations and courses requires time and expertise which the Committee could

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[8] *Ibid.*, 1906, p498.

not have had. However well meaning, entering the field of training and certification of organists was doomed to failure.

The first signs that a certification scheme was contemplated came in 1918:

> The Committee have under consideration the desirability of making an enquiry into the training and qualifications on the part of Precentors and Organists requisite for the the reverent and efficient rendering of the music of the Church and have resolved to proceed with such an enquiry. They hope to be able to report the result to the next General Assembly.

The debate on the possible revision of the *Church Hymnary* seems to have been more pressing - as indeed, one suspects, were the implications for everybody of the move to unite the Church of Scotland and the United Free Church, because the enquiry seems to have been "left on the table" for the next two Assemblies. Work must have been done on the proposals however, because in 1922 Courses of Instruction were announced. Subsequently Workers Education Association lectures in church music by Herbert Wiseman in Edinburgh and Continuation Classes in Glasgow by Archibald Henderson were launched in 1923. In this year the:

> Committee decided to invite the Societies of Organists in Glasgow, Edinburgh[9] and Belfast to send a representative for consultation and the invitation has been complied with. The presence of the organists' representatives at the meetings have been found to be of service, and it gives the organists an opportunity of making their views known.

Whatever notice was taken of the organists' contribution - not much one suspects given the short time allowed for reflecting on their comments - the scheme was ready in 1924 and launched with another expression of 'cordial appreciation of the services rendered by the choirs and organists of the Church' from the General Assembly.

The discontinuation of Wiseman's classes by the Workers Education Association was not the happiest start for the new certification process and only 1 diploma and 6 certificate candidates could be announced in 1925. In 1926 a 'good start' for the scheme of training for Organists and Choirmasters was reported and by 1930 the Committee could announce that:

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[9] These were the only extant Scottish Organists' Societies at the time.

In Organist Training Courses there were 43 participants in Glasgow, 20 in Aberdeen and 18 in Kirkcaldy. A class was promised for Dundee.

The 'fairly satisfactory' examination results showed

4	Diplomas in Church Music
4	Organist and Choirmaster Certificates
1	Harmoniumist Certificate
1	Choirmaster Certificate

The thinking behind the syllabus seems to have been that if organists are interested and motivated they will improve their skills. While far from underestimating the value of attempts to stimulate and encourage, a professional church music qualification should cover skills that a competent church organist requires. A secure knowledge of theory should be assumed in any musical assessment process, but, above all, for the church organist ability in practical skills like transposition, score reading and figured bass needs to be thoroughly tested. A proper syllabus should include set organ pieces and a clear indication of the standards expected in "tests at the keyboard". The examination process needs to be properly documented and the status of the examiners established, so that all involved can feel secure about the relevance and status of the qualification.

The detailed requirements of the certificates and diplomas were rather vague, as the following shows:

Scheme of Training in Church Music

Function and Use of Music in Church Worship; History of Music in general, Psalmody; Hymns; Canticles Plainsong; Gregorian Chant; Music; Organ Playing: - Accompaniment, Voluntaries, Transposition and Improvisation; Choir Training; Practical Hints for the Conduct of the musical part of the Church Service. At the close of the session an examination is held upon the following subjects for the benefit of those who desire to obtain the Diploma or one of the Certificates:

(a) The Function and use of Music in Church Worship; (b) Theory of Music (the possession of certificates from approved examining bodies exempts from examination on this subject, Church Music, its History, Theory and Practice; Choir Training (c) Organ Playing (Higher Grade): (d) Organ PLaying (Lower Grade); (e) Harmonium or American Organ Playing

The Certificates granted are as follows:

I The Diploma in Church Music to candidates who pass in (a), (b), and (c)

II Organist (Lower Grade) and Choirmaster's Certificate to candidates who pass in (a), (b) and (d).

III Harmoniumist and Choirmaster's Certificate to candidates who pass in (a), (b) and (e)

IV Choirmaster's Certificate to candidates who pass in (a) and (b)

The Committee seems to have considered that setting up certificates and diplomas basically required a series of lectures (either newly promoted or pre-existing) and the giving out of an exam paper at its conclusion when, in fact, sorting out the playing and paperwork requirements in meticulous detail was far more important.

Perhaps it is hardly to be wondered at that by 1932 the Training Courses for Organists had been discontinued - presumably on the grounds of poor take-up - and the Diploma was thereafter axed in 1935 with a final examination diet offered in 1936. As well as suffering local indifference the certificates and diplomas seem to have come in for some external criticism:

It has been found desirable to discontinue the examination for the Diploma in Church Music in deference to representation made to the Committee by the Incorporated Society of Musicians.[10] In view of this, a revised edition of the course of Reading for

[10] The ISM ran its own certification and diploma programme and was very wary of other qualifying agencies. It eventually became very worried about the proliferation of diplomas and decided that only the Royal Colleges should offer them:

> Choirmasters and Organists has been published by the Committee. It is hoped that a larger number of organists, especially in the remoter areas of the country, will present themselves for the examination to be held in March 1936.[11]

How many people actually sat the examination in 1936 (only 6 did in 1935) is not revealed.

Achieving high standards in the direction and accompaniment of church music requires as much skill as in any other musical activity. It is not possible to train people to these standards through evening classes and the occasional weekend course, and pointless to assess them on that basis. The Church of Scotland eventually seems to have realised this, but since other organisations are still tempted to provide part-time tuition and certification in Church Music, it can hardly be censured for trying. Most recently the Royal School of Church Music and the Incorporated Association of Organists[12] have offered certificates for church musicians which, whatever their merits, seem to have made minimal impact on church musicians. Two Scottish ventures with much more limited aims, The *Certificate in Church Music* offered by St Andrews University and the S.C.O.T.S. organ tuition scheme continue to attract business. Quite probably they do so because they claim to do no more than give church musicians a helping hand with basic skills like hymn and anthem accompaniment and some insights into other areas of the church musician's work under the guidance of leading practitioners. They certainly do not claim that a possessor of one of its certificates is in any way "qualified" as a church organist.

The successful Church-orientated schemes for the certification of organists are those which concentrate on assessment and whose only forays into teaching are preliminary "taster courses" so that candidates can familiarise themselves with the various examination requirements. Separating tuition and certification allows the providers of the latter to be much more rigorous and dispassionate when freed from any pressure to get "their" pupils through examinations. In the UK the certification of the many skills required to be a church organist has been almost the exclusive

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> Finally [Vice-President Mr A T Akeroyd] dealt with the prevalence of worthless professional diplomas granted by unqualified musical institutions.

Musical Times, February 1925, p161.
Unfortunately the ISM has not kept records of its meetings with the Church of Scotland. ISM Diplomas were dropped in 1925.

[11] *Reports of the General Assembly,* 1935, p947.

[12] The R.S.C.M. offers a *Foundation Certificate,* and the I.A.O. a *Certificate in Organ Playing.*

territory of the Royal College of Organists, though the London College of Music now offers Diplomas in Church Music.

The RCO was founded in 1864 and incorporated in 1893 by a Royal Charter. The RCO has prospered because it has always maintained high standards and jealously guarded its exclusive status. The College's success, however, has been greatly assisted by the circumstances that until recently it was possible to build a career round a Parish Church organist's post in England and Scotland, and that its written examinations were closely aligned to the requirements of both internal and external university BMus degrees.

In England and Scotland thirty to forty years ago, larger parish churches at least could expect to draw up a short list of suitable applicants for an organ post; now even important city parishes - particularly north of the Border - have to cajole likely players on to their consoles.[13] In the early 1960s there were well over two hundred candidates for RCO diplomas each year and the number of passes might exceed 120. Today only a handful of musicians bother to acquire these diplomas.

The reasons for this decline in RCO fortunes are not difficult to explain. In the days when all music undergraduates were required to be keyboard players and to study harmony and counterpoint, the RCO diplomas were a logical complement to a music degree - not to mention a safety net if a university or conservatoire career had to be abandoned.[14] The ability to play the organ was almost an absolute requirement for progress in independent school education and was certainly desirable in state schools[15] where, in fact, the FRCO gave a teacher "graduate status" for salary purposes. As late as the 1980s the higher reaches of music educational administration also seemed reserved for the organist when, for example, Sir David Willcocks (ex King's College Chapel, Cambridge) was at the Royal College, Sir David Lumsden (ex New College Chapel, Oxford) at the Royal Academy and Sir Philip Ledger (ex King's College Chapel, Cambridge) at the Royal Scottish Academy - all of whom were RCO diploma holders. Before World War II, indeed, the 'organ loft was

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[13] When the present writer became organist of Dundee Parish Church (St Mary's) in 1972, there was a long and short list for the post and three adjudicators. His son was offered the post without audition in 1995.

[14] Until the 1960s, exemption could be claimed from parts of the Trinity College, Dublin Mus.B .degree examinations by holders of the FRCO.

[15] When the present writer went to Dundee in 1969, most of his Principal Teacher colleagues were organists with church posts.

the royal road to the orchestral rostrum'[16] with such luminaries as Leopold Stokowski, Henry Wood and Malcolm Sargent all being trained organists.

Few organists could aspire to such eminence but, against a background of a church post giving a basic wage, a reservoir of private pupils within the congregation and some standing in the community, it is perhaps not surprising that, until as late as the 1960s at least, acquiring a basic competence on the organ and, if possible, a RCO diploma was a sensible thing for a young musician to do. He would have had the backing of another successful organist, Sir Thomas Armstrong, Organist of Exeter and Christ Church, Oxford Cathedrals and latterly Principal of the Royal Academy of Music in so doing.

> For myself, I would advise a young man to train himself as an organist if he had the inclination, the talents, and the character; and I would do so because I believe that the right type of man has a better chance of making himself a good place in the community by this means than he would have as a school musician in the state system, or as a programme designer or executive in the BBC, or as a music organiser.[17] If his gifts are absolutely outstanding, if he is a performer or creative musician or near-genius, the position may be different: but there are few entries in this class and I would advise such a career only to a very small minority, whereas I believe that many would find satisfying lives in a musical career centered round the normal organist's duties, if they were not bewitched by publicity and false glamour and the name of London.[18]

In retrospect it is all too easy to point out the flaws in the Committee's attempt to introduce a scheme of certification in competition with organisations like the RCO. Performing standards were not clearly indicated through a syllabus of required organ pieces and tests. The status of both diploma and certificate as professional qualifications was extremely doubtful. Perhaps the Committee should have investigated having the awards validated - and even run - by Edinburgh or Glasgow Universities, both of which had music departments, if it was determined to make a success of its certification scheme. Realising its 'lack of authority' in musical matters the Committee eventually did attempt to interest an "outside body" - the

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16 D. Lumsden, *Op. Cit., Organist's Review,* October 1987 p293.

17 The departure in February 2001 of the Director of the Music Centre, St Andrews University, to a parish organ post in Cambridge (Great St Mary's) proves that Armstrong's advice still resonates with young musicians fifty years after it was given.

18 K. Shelton, 'The Passing of a Tradition: Sir Thomas Armstrong (1898-1994)', *Organists' Review,* November 1994, p326.

then new Scottish National Academy of Music - in producing its own 'Diploma or other Certificate in Church Music'. Despite optimism that a "satisfactory arrangement'[19] might emerge following a conference between representatives of the Committee and the Board of the SNAM nothing appears to have materialised.

The German authorities run a certification process for organists, where promotion to the larger churches depends on progressing through various grades. Since the wages of Church Organists in Germany are indirectly paid by the State, it is obviously not a problem to insist on qualifications. Had some form of certification been brought in sensitively over a lengthy time span in post-World War I Scotland, it also might have been successful, since by then there was a sufficient supply of organists to allow churches to be selective. Sadly the scheme that was adopted had neither status nor sufficient commitment from either providers or clients to be a success.

Especially in the UK, only where organisations can and are determined to insist on universal certification is there any point in running assessment courses. There is also a clear limit to what even a exceptionally competent central committee pursuing attainable objects can do without the authority of, say, a Medical or Teaching Council. Perhaps the Committee should have investigated establishing a minimum standard that had to be reached before an organist could apply for a church post, as used to happen to music teachers with English qualifications looking for jobs in Scottish schools. However glamorous the source of their PGCE diploma, attendance at a College of Education to sit ear tests and play the piano was still mandatory before teachers without a Scottish Teaching qualification could be allowed into Scottish classrooms. One could still suspect that had the Committee been able to insist on minimum standards and found acceptable assessors the resulting improvements might not have outweighed the almost guaranteed hostility. Churches in the 1920s and 30s were no doubt pleased to receive applications from candidates with a diploma or certificate from the Psalms and Hymns Committee/Committee on Public Worship and Aids to Devotion[20] - or even a statement of competence had there been such a thing - but their final choice

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19 *Reports of the General Assembly*, 1931, p1075.

20 Congregations were were certainly encouraged to employ diploma holders:

> The Committee [Public Worship and Aids to Devotion] urges those who appoint organists and choirmasters to give favourable consideration to candidates holding the Church of Scotland Diploma in Church Music

Church of Scotland Year Book, 1934, p172.

would still be decided by audition and interview, while such qualifications that were really likely to influence them would be from the Royal Colleges and the Universities. Indeed one suspects that the Church of Scotland "home grown" Certificates and Diplomas were always regarded as peripheral by both the churches and the organists.

The Committee's shortcomings in tackling major projects had been tellingly revealed in the wording and analysis of a major Enquiry into music in the Church of Scotland it had made in the early 20th century. In October 1904 a circular with eight queries had been sent to Kirk Sessions and this elicited 846 replies. Since it was felt worthwhile chasing up those that had not replied a detailed report was held over until the General Assembly of 1906, when the committee could report a grand total of 1249 replies from 1414 Kirk Sessions. Such an excellent response is not only highly creditable but must indicate a general confidence that church music was in a vital state,[21] or at least that it could or should be.

The eight queries in the 1905/6 Enquiry were as follows:

> Query 1
>
> How is your Psalmody conducted? Have you -
> (a) A Precentor, Organist, or both?
> (b) A Choir
> (c) If an instrument, of what kind.
>
> Query II
>
> If a Choir, state the average number of members, and the proportion of sopranos, altos, tenors and basses. How many paid members are there (if any) for each vocal part?

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[21] A contemporary report noting the fine choir and the new hymns sung in one Oban United Free church might be thought to provide evidence of robust musical health in the Scottish Church in general, once the organ had become well established - despite some nostalgia for earlier times:

> Even in Dunollie Road Church, when I was last there and heard the new hymns sung with musical accompaniment, and the aid of a fine choir, my thoughts yet wandered back to the old church in Tweeddale Street, when George Elliot stood in the precentor's desk and led the congregation in singing Psalms to tunes that are seldom heard now.

D. Macrae, 'Some Reminiscences of Oban in the days of my Childhood', *Oban and the District Around,* p119.

Query III

Do you use the following books, or any of them, in public worship? (a) "Scottish Hymnal," (b) "Church Hymnary," (c) "Book of Psalms and Paraphrases, with Tunes," (d) "Psalter in Metre," (e) "Scottish Prose Psalter, pointed for chanting" (f) "Scottish Anthem Book". Kindly specify any other books used by you in the musical portions of the service.

Query IV

What are the arrangements for practising as regards Choir and Congregation respectively, and as to continued supply of voices to take the place of their leaving? Are there any juvenile classes, Sunday-school choirs, or the like? Have you a Music Committee?

Query V

(a) Are the Psalms and Paraphrases regularly sung at the ordinary diets of worship?

(b) How many Psalms, how many Paraphrases, and how many hymns are usually sung at each service?

(c) Do you sing Anthems, and if so, at what part of the service?

(d) Do you chant

(1) the prose Psalms,

(2) the metrical Psalms?

Query VI

Does your Congregation join generally and heartily in the singing at public worship?

Query VII

Have you any additional information to give the committee which may further the purpose of the Overture?

Query VIII

> Have you any suggestions to make to the Committee which might aid them in devising means for improving the service of Praise in your Parish or throughout the Church generally?[22]

The Committee seems to have realised (or perhaps not!), that the queries were not as formulated as well as they should have been:

Query I

> The whole answer under sub-heading (a) is sometimes "organist and choirmaster" or "organist and precentor". It is often impossible to be sure whether one person or two are employed...
>
> The Sub-Committee have accordingly classed by themselves those returns where the word "organ" is used, and there is nothing in the answer to show whether a pipe organ or an American organ is meant.

Not only to present-day readers, the failure to identify how many precentors led the singing[23] or how many churches had harmoniums rather than organs must have been frustrating to contemporary readers. The Committee were anxious to encourage the organ rather than the harmonium (it pointed out that organs [like the Walcker *Dunsenell*] could be obtained almost as cheaply as harmoniums) and it would have been as interesting then as now to know the relative numbers of both instruments. In Query II, the size and composition of the average choir in major city parish churches and in smaller country churches would have been invaluable in planning anthem books and so on as well as allowing later readers to assess the effect of church choirs on the musical life of early 20th-century Scotland. Queries VII and VIII could have been combined with advantage; the list of improvements could go on and on.

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22 *Reports of the General Assembly*, 1905, p808.

23 Presumably quite a lot because twenty years later a precentor could still be found leading the praise in a Church of Scotland Parish:

> On April 18 [1926], an organ was dedicated at Kilrenny Parish Church. This brought to an end the unique position of the church as being the only one in the district to which a precentor held office.

East Fife Observer Year Book, 1926, p69.

Much of the carelessness and inadequacies of the Committee's efforts can be ascribed to lack of expertise and insufficient time and funds to prepare new ploys adequately, but the forces of reaction must have been an element harassing its work at nearly every turn. The terms of the Enquiry were not such that encouraged complete frankness on the part of either Committee or respondents, since the remit was a fairly blatant attempt to ensure that metrical psalms were sedulously performed [my underlining]:

> Whereas it is desirable to encourage more general, hearty and melodious singing in the congregations of the church and to see that the Psalms and Paraphrases retain their due place in public worship and whereas for this purpose it is important to ascertain what is the present condition of congregational praise and how it is affected by the various methods in use for the conducting of this part of divine service: it is humbly overtured to the Venerable the General Assembly by the undersigned that instruction be given to the Committee on Psalmody and Hymnals to prepare and issue to Kirk Sessions a schedule of enquiry on the subject and to report to the next Assembly whether, in their opinion, any practical steps could with advantage be taken in the matter.[24]

Given the unique nature of the enquiry therefore, perhaps shortcomings in the formulation of the queries and possible evasions in the answers were only to be expected, particularly given the rather biased brief. Churches only too aware of the answers they were expected to give about their 'due employment of the psalms and paraphrases' presumably would be not be all that keen to admit the use of Moody and Sankey *Sacred Songs and Solos,* for example, and might be be happy to explore every bolthole on offer. This understandable reticence, coupled with the well-established tradition of a Church of Scotland Session keeping the parish's doings "close to its chest" - which make the reading of Minutes so tiresome - would ensure complete frankness only if prompted by a well planned questionnaire. It might have been wise, for example, to have provided a complete list of all well-known hymnbooks - including *Ancient and Modern* and *Sacred Songs and Solos* - to which respondents had to provide answers. After all, it could well be that "forgetting" to mention something lies easier on the conscience than the deliberate withholding of a "tick in the appropriate box."

In some respects the analysis of the Enquiry returns is also on the elliptical side. The Committee claimed, for example, that the 'returns as a whole, however, do not

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[24] *Reports of the General Assembly,* 1904, p777

appear to the Sub-Committee to indicate that the Psalms and Paraphrases are being superseded by Hymns'. How much selective reading of the runes was required to come up with this reassuring assessment might be questioned, as indeed what precisely the Committee meant by 'proper tempo', 'in a manner in accordance with Scottish tradition' not to mention 'innovations' in the following:

> The comment frequently appears in the schedules ... that the Psalms and Paraphrases are more heartily joined in by the congregation than any other musical portion of the service; and there is an evident desire in many quarters to increase their being sung to familiar and appropriate tunes at a proper tempo and in a manner in accordance with Scottish tradition. The following answer comes from a northern parish:-
>
> It is very observable here - where the people are not "old fashioned" or in any way opposed to "innovations" but rather like them - the singing is most hearty at the Psalms.

Where analysis seems a straightforward matter to a modern reader, apparently there are sufficient ambiguities to render summarisation by the Committee very difficult:

> So much depends on the standard of congregational singing which the different reporters had in mind that it would be a mistake to found very much on the general result as disclosed in the answers to this query, taken collectively.

Again a carefully constructed check list covering volume, tuning, sound quality and so on might have helped. Nevertheless the 'cases in which the congregational singing is said to be generally good and hearty, or at least to be hearty, was encouragingly high (921 positive responses is a sizeable percentage of the 1400 returns)!

In three matters, the employment of anthems, the formation of Choir Unions and the singing of prose psalms the Committee did show real flair and, one suspects, a certain amount of courage. Many of the responses the Committee printed in its commentary on the results of the Enquiry are routine and negative. They would hardly have encouraged bold leadership in contentious areas such as liturgical choir anthems and prose psalmody:

"Negative Responses"

inter alia

> Restoration of Old Tunes.
> Objections to changes.
> That more Psalms be sung to the old Psalm tunes and
> fewer hymns.
> That elaborate music, Anthems, prose Psalms should not be
> forced upon congregations.
> That the singing of anthems should be discontinued.
> That prose chants should be abolished.

Despite a number of returns advising the exact opposite, against such a background the Committee members no doubt felt it wise to move cautiously. The delicacy the Committee demonstrated in encouraging congregations to accept that there was a place for the more ambitious liturgical anthem which previously had been banished to the *Soirée* or Choir Union Concert is impressive. First it defused (or obfuscated) the problem.

The Committee was:

> convinced of the importance of encouraging choirs to practise more elaborate music than that usually sung in public worship. They consider that such practice is always most efficient when directed towards some practical end, be it a recital of sacred music, a church service for some special occasion, or a meeting with other choirs. The last is particularly helpful, as preparing the way in time for the performance of musical works on a larger scale, such as cantatas and oratorios. Choirs and congregations alike are thus afforded opportunities of taking part in or hearing the works of the great composers of sacred music, which without friendly co-operation of this kind could not be attempted.

The enthusiasm for Choir Unions might suggest that the Committee believed recitals and oratorio and cantata performances were ways of keeping church choirs quiescent and out of the hair of congregations. The Committee was probably only too mindful of the requests that 'elaborate music, anthems, prose psalms should not be forced upon congregations' and that 'the singing of anthems should be

discontinued' and no doubt also suspicious that many congregations still shared the views of Dyce as expressed in the *Christian Remembrancer* :

> Every shade of musical taste in its connection with divine worship may find its gratification in the service of the church, but then the service must be really carried out in its true form.[25]

The production of anthem books with works for which the compilers disclaimed any responsibility, if used in services, had earlier revealed this nervousness at the possible reaction of congregations rather than any deep seated theological concerns about anthems on the part of church leaders. *The Preface* of one of the first of these, *Selected Anthems (Free Church Hymn Book Part II) 1890* makes this clear: (my underlining)

> In compiling this collection, the Committee have had in view not only to supply pieces suitable for use in public worship, but also to provide material for choir practices, such as might serve to promote greater interest in sacred music among the members of church choirs. Hence the collection includes not merely a selection of simple anthems ranging from one to two pages, but a considerable number of anthems of greater length and difficulty, such as it might not be desirable, or in many cases possible, to use in the service of praise. These more elaborate anthems may be found useful at congregational meetings and ordination/induction soirees, at which very inferior and undevotional music is frequently sung.

Throughout much of the earlier part of the commentary on the Enquiry, it might seem that in the face of what was probably perceived as a reluctance on the part of many congregational members to entertain musical "displays" of any sort, the Committee wished to avoid the issue of choir anthems in church services altogether. Although hidden behind a certain amount of camouflage, it later becomes apparent that the Committee did in fact believe that the choir anthem had a liturgical role. After noting that 'it may be well that the anthem should be reserved for the choir' and if so sung 'the other selections of praise should be such as will admit of the hearty singing of the congregation' the Committee quote from a paper contributed to the Church Music Committee reporting to the Worcester Diocesan Conference in 1904 [my underlining]:

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[25] *Dyce Papers*, p490.

> In regard to the use of anthems in village churches, where they can be done *well* let them be used; but if they are used, I think it is necessary to explain their use to the congregation. Teach them to look upon them in the same light as Lessons or Sermon. Let them always have the words before them, and they will soon learn to understand the worship of silence, and to value the association of the sacred text with the music; and when the words of an Anthem occur in Lessons or Sermon, they will come to them with a new power and life. But if this is to be so, the music must be really good, and the execution of it such as people with musical ears can listen to with pleasure and edification. The anthem should be regarded by the choir and congregation as an offering to Almighty God of the best efforts of which they are capable, and must be the outcome of self-sacrifice on the part of those who offer it.

The Committee's use of this quotation is possibly braver than at first appears because identifying an unsophisticated English Village Congregation as an example for Scottish Kirks to emulate might have caused more than a few eyebrows to be raised!

Perhaps - as most church people would today - in its heart the Committee believed that a healthy parish music programme should have the work of the choir centred on the services of the church in which it sings, and was prepared to risk saying so though in a rather oblique way. Possibly the Committee realised that regarding a church choir as just a part of a choral society risks deflecting attention away from its liturgical function, even hymn singing, and leaves the choir members with some doubts as to where their loyalties should lie - a fact that was surely recognised as easily then as now.[26] Sadly also, choirs coming together to sing music selected by individuals or committees outwith the parish has always been a recipe for tensions, 'coldness and apathy', even in the Episcopal Church where the Diocesan structure is much more conducive to leadership from, say, the Cathedral Organist.[27]

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[26] The experience of North Leith over its only tenor (J. C. Wright) wishing to sing in the St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, Edinburgh Special Choir could be cited (see page 137).

[27] Dr Douglas Lloyd further points out that Anglican Diocesan Festivals often introduced new material that participating choirs could use in their own churches. In this respect they differed from the Choir Unions which were designed to study material that could not be sung in parish churches. Parochial self-interest would seem to have been better served by the Festivals than the Unions yet illwill could still flourish.

> ... When we consider the percentage of choirs that refrain from taking part in the Annual Festival it is evident there has been "coldness and apathy" displayed in the matter...[28]

Since the vast majority of works sung by Secular Choral Societies come from the 'great composers of sacred music' anyway, there was really no need for duplication of effort, certainly in the bigger Scottish Cities and Towns. Nevertheless, in public at least, the Committee and the General Assembly were at one on the issue of Choir Unions. The latter in 1911 endorsed the Committee's stance by agreeing to a deliverance which:

> noted with interest the progress of the movement for instituting combinations of Choirs, and instruct the Committee to consider whether they can do anything to further the formation and development of Choir Unions throughout the Church.[29]

The Committee accordingly prepared an excellent Model Constitution of a Choir Union for the consideration of the General Assembly . By 1916 nearly all the Choir Unions had had to be abandoned because of the War. The movement never seems to have recovered its early vitality, despite the encouragement of the Committee up to the 1930s, and appears to have foundered well before World War II.

Support for Choir Unions may underline the awareness, which first surfaced in publications like *Selected Anthems*, that if the repertoire of church choirs was to progress beyond simple pieces like R A Smith's *How beautiful upon the mountains,* the organ would have to be used. More complex and attractive unaccompanied pieces by Renaissance and 19th-century composers from Mendelssohn to Brahms and Stanford were around when *Selected Anthems* was published, so it was not really necessary to include anthems like the last's *Why seek ye the living among the dead* which has an important ["orchestral"] organ part, if the compilers really did wish to include material for the more skilled church choir "not requiring the foreign aid of instruments". This process of bringing congregations to accept the inevitable was to culminate in the, by then united, Church of Scotland

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[28] Pattman was Conductor of the Glasgow Diocesan Festival and had noted:

> ... "if not misunderstanding, at least apathy and coldness, existed towards Diocesan Festivals *generally*" obviously not by those who take part in them, but those who do not.

'Letters to the Editor', *Scottish Chronicle,* 29 06 03.

[29] *Reports of the General Assembly,* 1911, p 1213.

commissioning one of the best anthem books ever produced, *The Church Anthem Book* of 1933 where the majority of the anthems do have organ accompaniments. The fact that it was able to do so must be taken in least in part as a vindication of the Committee's leadership over the years since the introduction of the organ.

The church choir obviously thrived on the opportunity to learn and perform anthems, and it is surely safe to say they would not have flourished they way they did without the "licence" guaranteed by the Committee to perform every Sunday . As late as the 1960s the church choir provided a steady stream of competent singers to sing in the then huge choral unions, employment opportunities for sometimes highly gifted professional singers - John and Marie Tainsh in St Cuthbert's, Edinburgh for example. Young professional organists had the opportunity to deal with what was often a mini-choral society - Thorpe Davie's attitudes and expertise were almost definitely honed in St Margaret's, Dalry as the similarity of programmes from his days there and his later ones in St Salvator's makes absolutely clear.[30]

Effective leadership was shown by the Committee's promotion of prose psalms, which would certainly have alien *i.e.* Anglican, resonances and even "set service" liturgical overtones in some minds, and its strong condemnation of chanting metrical psalms. To a modern church musician the thought that metrical psalms could be chanted verges on the barbaric; one wonders where and why the practice started - the Committee was certainly anxious to see the end of it:

> The Sub-Committee regret to see that the practice of chanting the metrical Psalms is so prevalent throughout the Church. This state of matters suggests a complete ignorance or misunderstanding of the nature of chanting and its possibilities.

On the issues of prose psalm singing the Committee's recommendations are as valid today as when they were written. This study has referred to the need for "centres of excellence" or "examples of best practice" to which the attention of those concerned with church music can be directed. Here is a homely but highly effective example of the latter from the Committee. A minister or organist is not going to

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[30] Thorpe Davie seems to have been fond of the music of Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672) and regularly performed his music in St Salvator's Chapel. Perhaps the reactions of his St Margaret's, Dalry and Queen's Park High Choirs to Schütz's music had encouraged him. The former's performance on Sunday 9th May 1939 of Schütz's *St Matthew Passion* was believed to be the first in Scotland.

feel threatened or put in his place by the following "how-to-do-it" advice, but stimulated to try out a similar strategy for himself:

> The following may be quoted from a letter sent to the Committee, as showing how the practice of chanting was acquired by the congregation referred to:-
>
> (1) We supply the whole congregation - or rather every seat - with copies of the 'Scottish Prose Psalter" pointed, but without music.
>
> (2) We have chanted the Psalms for twenty years. We began with a few constantly repeated, choosing those which have no long recitation - 34th, 66th, 103rd, and especially 136th, in which the refrain encourages timid singers.
>
> (3) As part of their lessons the Sunday scholars learn a prose Psalm, and during the Sundays that they are learning it they also sing it as a part of the Sunday-school service, Every child that passes through the Sunday-school is at least used to prose chanting.
>
> (4) We make regular use of the *Te Deum, Benedicite omnia opera, Benedictus, Gloria in excelsis, Magnificat,* and *Nunc Dimittis,* almost invariably using chants and not special settings, so that any one who sings at all learns so much prose chanting from these, and is encouraged in trying to join in the singing of the Psalms".

The General Assembly seems to have followed its Psalmody and Hymns Committee investigations and proposals with sympathy and encouragement, except when it came to financial matters. The publication of the *Scottish Hymnal* and the *Church Hymnary* had produced a steady income for the Church but when the Committee wished to put the profits or part of them to strictly musical purposes the General Assembly's response was very guarded.

Where it seemed likely that the Committee's recommendations would make money no objections were raised, but if it appeared that financial control might slip from the General Assembly checks were immediately introduced. In the overture submitted to the General Assembly in 1908 one of the two paragraphs was accepted without quibble:

> The Assembly instruct the Committee to approach the Praise Committee of the United Free Church with the view of arranging for the publication of a selection of Psalms and Paraphrases, with Music, for use in Schools, by the Churches which co-operated in preparing the Church Hymnary and the Psalter in Metre. The General Assembly also instruct the Committee to prepare a collection of short simple anthems and a small selection of Chants (music only) as suggested in the Report; also to consider and report as to the advisability of publishing a simple Mission Hymnal.

But the second had to be changed from:

> The General Assembly approve of the suggestion that the profits, of the Church Hymnary, Scottish Hymnal, and other publication made by the Committee, including the joint publications, should be applied towards the improvement of Psalmody; and they instruct the Committee to communicate with the General Committee of the Church with a view to arranging as to the best manner of carrying out this suggestion, and to report to the next General Assembly.

to:

> The General Assembly remit to the Committee to consider more fully as to a scheme for giving grants-in-aid for the purpose of encouraging congregations in their endeavours to improve their Psalmody - with instructions to consult with the General Committee of the Church as to the source[31] from which the necessary funds might be derived.[32]

The General Assembly was obviously giving a very clear signal that good music was welcomed, but not at any price. After the flurry of activity over the Enquiry, progress seems to have been relatively slow - as was probably inevitable without adequate funding. In 1908 it was noted that children were still taught hymns rather than psalms and paraphrases. In 1910 the Committee reported that instruction in

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[31] The General Assembly obviously wished to keep its hands on the royalties as an incident in 1912 makes clear: Commenting on the General Assembly requesting £200 to help with travel expenses for the Committee on Union with the United Free Church a slight bitterness on the part of the Psalmody and Hymns Committee may be detected:

> As these royalties are the main fund from which the grants in aid of Psalmody and your Committee's expenses generally fall to be met, the suggested arrangement was agreed to by your committee with some difficulty, and on the distinct understanding that it should form no precedent for charging any further expenses upon these royalties....

Reports of the General Assembly, 1912, p869.

[32] *Ibid.*, 1909, p837.

church music was being provided for students of divinity at the universities, and in 1911 there were indications that at least morale was high when the General Assembly could record its 'sense of the valuable and zealous service rendered by choirs and choirmasters to the church'.[33]

In 1912 the Committee was able to announce the publication of the *Scottish Mission Hymnbook*, to give the report discussed above on Instruction in Church Music for Students of Divinity and to publish a Statement as to the Progress of the Choir Union Movement throughout the church which had been circulated to every minister.[34]

Later, after the unfortunate saga of the certificates and diplomas, the Committee, in co-operation with the Joint Committee on Music and Drama in Scotland, did have a major triumph in the late 1930s with the promotion of:

> a school for rural conductors to be held in Edinburgh from 26th to 31st July [1937]. The course includes lectures in Church Music and practical instruction in Choir Training. Bursaries are offered to assist Organists and Choirmasters from a distance to attend the school and it is hoped that there will be a large enrolment of students.[35]

This was such a success - 55 rural organists and teachers of music attended in the first year - that it was repeated for many years. Led by such authorities as Ernest Bullock[36] of Glasgow University and Glasgow Atheneum (predecessor of the RSAMD) the Committee had come up with a formula to improve Scottish Church Music in a practical and effective way by providing another "centre of excellence". One could have wished that such courses had been run and the lessons from them digested before the risky enterprise of promoting diplomas and certificates had been embarked upon!

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[33] *Ibid.*, 1911, p1213.
[34] *Ibid.*, 1912, p874.
[35] *Ibid.*, 1937, p973.
[36] Bullock was one of the most successful choir trainers of his generation. Translated from Exeter Cathedral to Westminster Abbey (in succession to Sidney Nicholson, the founder of the RSCM), one of his choirboys was David Willcocks who regarded him with great respect and affection.

Chapter 8

Classical and Modern: the end of consensus.

Scotland's ambivalence towards music has been demonstrated in the Church by innovators being left to fend for themselves without support or expert guidance. Since music as a liturgical tool has, until recently at least, never been of much consequence, indeed suspect in many quarters, justification for music in the churches has therefore been as much moral as religious. The churches' endorsement of the moral value of music has legitimised the activities of those organists who devoted more of their time and energy to schools and musical administration than would have been possible in the Church of England, for example. The benefits to Scottish music may have been considerable but, as CH3 *in particular illustrates, the lack of committed liturgical musicians has resulted in missed opportunities and some insensitivity to changing musical conditions.*

The Scottish Churches' lack of enterprise in musical matters before the advent of the organ has been noted. Predictably the widespread adoption of the organ in the latter years of the 19th century did not produce a sea-change in musical attitudes other than a greater appetite for hymns and, in some circles, choir anthems. Unlike the various parties in the 19th-century Church of England, which produced or adopted hymn and service books sympathetic to their standpoints, there has been an all-enveloping musical conformity in nearly every strand of Scottish Presbyterianism. In fact no part of the Scottish Church seems to have been willing to be boldly different in its repertoire - even the Episcopal Church started steering a moderately individual course only in the early 19th century.

Comparing Scotland's musical "conformity" with England's "independence" is not a simple "like with like" process. England is much bigger, and certainly in the 19th century probably had a much larger moneyed class with the funds and time to spend on musical interests. The English clergymen and connoisseurs that were most involved in the production of *Ancient and Modern*, the *Yattendon*[1] and the *Songs*

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[1] Robert Bridges:

> ... gave up [medical] practice in 1882, settled at Yattendon in Berkshire and devoted himself to literature.

J. Moffatt and M. Patrick, *Handbook to the Church Hymnary*, p279.

of Sion[2] Hymnbooks were able to pursue their musical and poetic interests in a way which few Scottish church or lay people could match. Nevertheless there were able Scottish clergy like the hymn-writer Horatius Bonar (1808-1889) and the painter/musician John Thomson (1778-1840) among others who in more dynamic ecclesiastical artistic surroundings may have diverted more of their energies to the music of the Church. Bonar ploughed a lonely furrow and achieved good results in his hymns, but it is generally difficult for artists and musicians to work successfully in isolation. Haydn may have been 'forced to be original' in Esterhazy but his greatest work came after he had met, played and exchanged quartets with Mozart. Bonar's hymns in fact:

> ... were thrown off in the most casual way: he seemed to attach little importance to them, and was seldom at pains to exercise the artificer's art upon them, or to refine their blemishes away; many of them, therefore, are marred by defective rhythm, inharmonious[3] rhymes and obvious faults.[4]

Had Bonar been part of a vigorous critical circle like the proprietors of *Ancient and Modern*, or indeed even heard his hymns sung in his own church, it is unlikely that he would have wished - or have been allowed - to ignore the slip-shod in his work.

The dangers of working in isolation and in an uncritical environment are only too well illustrated by the one of the very few examples of music which by any stretch of the imagination can be connected with the Scoto-Catholic wing of the Church of Scotland.[5] (Prose Psalters, which were frequently found in early 20th-century Scottish Presbyterian churches, may have been regarded as slightly 'high church' but hardly "Scoto-Catholic".)

The *Office for the Annual Meeting of the Aberdeen Ecclesiological Society*[6] was compiled by John Macdonell Nisbet (1857-1934) in 1893. Here plainsong (or

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[2] G.R. Woodward, after the death of his young wife:

> .... may now have felt free to pursue his particular literary and musical interests without the need to augment his private financial resources by an incumbent's stipend.

J. E. Barnes, *George Ratcliffe Woodward Priest, Poet and Musician*, p57.

[3] The use of 'inharmonious' recalls Paynes Guide. See p63.

[4] J. Moffatt and M. Patrick, *Op. Cit.*, p 274.

[5] J Newbigging Adamson's *Dunkeld Litany* was set to plainsong, but despite being printed, no copies appear to have survived. *The Order of Colmonell* is a mixture of plainsong and polyphony. See page 289.

[6] See Appendix p298.

something like it) was introduced into a Scottish context, probably for the first time since the Reformation.

Nisbet's enthusiasm for liturgical plainsong may have originated with or at least matured under the patronage of James Cooper (1844 -1922). Cooper had been the controversial minister at the East Church, Aberdeen for seven years before Nisbet became his organist in 1890. Cooper was one of the those in the 1860s who had began to think and speak of forming a national church for the UK, indeed 'for Cooper the unity of the church was of the greatest importance, and he wished, above all, to promote the union of the Church of Scotland with the Church of England'.[7] Well before Nisbet moved to Aberdeen, Cooper had been criticised for having used a *Litany* at a children's service and 'to have intoned the ministerial part "like an English clergyman" while the children had sung the responses "like an Episcopal congregation".[8] So when in 1895 Nisbet could write 'that all things may be done decently and in order', it is desirable that 'where possible these [the Creeds] be sung softly to a monotone, with an inflection at the termination of a sentence' it can certainly be claimed that both men were at least on the same "wavelength". The actual repetition of the creeds, let alone their intoning, was a source of tension, particularly to Broad Church elements in the Church of Scotland[9] at that time, and it would be surprising if Nisbet did not realise he was treading on dangerous ground.

As with Bonar, Nisbet was possibly forced to work without support or advice and to have shortcomings in his work left unchallenged. He would have greatly benefited from a J. B. Dykes casting an eye over his uncertain and idiosyncratic *Office* for example. Arranging plainsong - or composing it - is not a 'simple matter for the intelligent organist'[10] - it requires scholarship and sensitivity:

> The rhythms and metres of the Gregorian chants are so different that a psalm pointed to suit one chant will not suit another; and [possibly with even more point in the case of

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[7] D. M. Murray, 'James Cooper and the East Church Case at Aberdeen 1882-3 The High Church Movement Vindicated', *Records of The Scottish Church History Society*, Vol 19, p217.

[8] *Ibid.*, p223.

[9]
> While we do not object to the occasional use in worship of the "Apostles' Creed" we should deprecate the inclusion of it in every morning and evening service...

J. Kerr, *Op. Cit.*, p 96.

[10] J. M. Nisbet, 'Church Music and Choirs', *Divine Life of the Church Second Series Volume II*, p218.

> the *Office*'] I have heard the Gregorian chants very finely accompanied. But generally the practical difficulties which attend their successful rendering are so imperfectly overcome, that the Psalms, which should form one of the most delightful parts of the service, become very 'pain and grief'.[11]

Like the English Ecclesiologists, Nisbet recommended plainsong as a practical way of singing prose psalms:

> The prose psalms are essentially part of the people's worship and if they are to be sung, they must be sung by the people, and not by the choir alone. Let me endeavour to suggest a means to attain that desirable end, namely, by the revival of the ancient plainsong. In commending the use of plainsong, I am advocating a return to the ancient usage of the Church - to a style of music for many centuries the heritage of the people. Properly used, it is peculiarly suitable for the musical recitation of the prose version of the psalms.

Nisbet advised 'the use of a Psalter Noted - that is, with the plainsong music written along with the text, a note for each syllable' and he also advocated what was later to be known as fauxbourdon settings of the canticles:

> A very effective way of using Plainsong to the Canticles is by giving alternate verses to the congregation in unison, the choir singing the other verses in harmony, but always retaining the Plainsong in one of the parts, tenor or soprano.[12]

The excellence of this advice was sadly not reflected in the musical quality of the *Office*. Some of its inadequacies can be simply attributed to Nisbet's lack of compositional flair but it goes without saying that in a musical environment which questions and evaluates everything, Nisbet's "plainsong" would have been carefully scrutinised and its weaknesses exposed and corrected long before publication.

Nisbit's shortcomings as a composer are tellingly revealed in his hymn tune *Carden Place* [13] to the words 'Thou standest at the altar' which appeared in *RCH* only to be replaced with a much stronger chorale tune in *CH3*. *Carden Place* has very awkward cadences at the ends of the first and third lines giving an abrupt sawn-off feeling to words like 'prayer' and 'vision'. Making each phrase start with a one beat

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[11] J.B. Dykes quoted in G Wauchope Stewart, *Op. Cit.*, p185.
[12] J. M. Nisbet, *Op. Cit.*, p 216.
[13] See Appendix p302. The *CH3* replacement is also given.

note and lengthening the first notes of bars 2 and 6 in "traditional Scottish Psalm Tune rhythm" would help, but the overall impression is frankly disappointing. To some degree this is due to a tune which seems to flirt with modality - in the manner of Vaughan Williams' *Down Ampney* - but one whose harmonies lack "direction": in a B minor tune perhaps the first two cadences should not be in the relative major, the final two in the home key and the opportunity to make a telling modulation to *inter alia* either the dominant or subdominant eschewed. It is perhaps ungenerous to draw too many conclusions from one rather poor piece of work, but sadly the insensitivity to both balance and style *Carden Place* reveals also pervades the *Office*.

There is no particular reason why a composer should feel hamstrung by "authenticity", but the frequent "stylistic solecisms" in both the "plainsong" and the "Anglican chant" of the *Office* only compound the general feeling of musical discomfort.

The *Office* starts with two responses by Thomas Tallis[14] followed by one of Nisbet's own - presumably made necessary by the inelegant and tautologous "Praise to Thee, O Lord, King of Eternal Glory" instead of the more usual "The Lord's Name be Praised". Nisbet regrettably does not follow Tallis's harmonies for "The Lord's Name be Praised" which concludes with a plagal cadence in F major for the new versicle and response, but composes a shortened Anglican chant version of his own in G major; unsurprisingly this seriously jars with the modal C Tallis has established.

Sadly this stream of criticism has to continue with both the psalm *Quam dilecta* and the final set of responses. *Quam dilecta* is pointed as for a ten-note Anglican chant, yet the tune is presumably intended to "sound like plainsong" complete with an intonation for the first verse. The second last semibreve would more honestly be rendered as two minims, as that is the way the psalm is pointed. Overall the effect is neither one thing nor the other.

The harmonies of each cadence in the final responses are distressing for even the most charitable.

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[14] See Appendix p303.

Nisbet's compositional ability can be questioned, but not his integrity. His unflagging commitment to the East Parish is seen in the neatly-kept notebooks in which he recorded not only his recital programmes but the hymns, anthems, voluntaries and the 'choristers' attendances at 'Mattins' and 'Evensong' during his entire time as organist.[15] His views on church music as a devoted and enthusiastic life-long practitioner therefore must be regarded with respect. Many people would agree with his assertion that congregational worship was more important in church services than 'good organ playing and choir part-singing', and at least some - if not the Psalmody and Hymns Committee of the General Assembly - would share his distaste for concerts of church music masquerading as 'services of praise'.[16]

From his obituary in the *Transactions of the Scottish Ecclesiological Society* one gets the impression that Nisbet was at best regarded as an eccentric and, quite probably, a bit of a nuisance by the clergy:

> The late Mr Nisbet, long an organist in Aberdeen, was a valued member of the Society in his own way. He took peculiar and careful interest in the Music of the Office and to him we owe its present form.[17]

While the use of 'in his own way' and 'peculiar' (hopefully an archaic alternative to special) may have been kindly meant, Nisbet's views as expressed in the *Divine Life of the Church* - and which he probably maintained throughout his career as assiduously as his notebooks - may well have alienated ministers wary of "amateur" liturgists as well as those in the Scottish Ecclesiological Society entrusted with his obituary. It is at least as likely, however, that the inelegant quasi-plainsong of the *Office* was the main source of any disaffection within the Society.

Despite the amateurishness of his musical efforts, Nisbet did have a vision for church music, and his challenge to have the 'courage to make a full use, at least in her larger temples, for the glory of God and the edification of all sorts of all the

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[15] See Appendix p276.

[16]

> I cannot conclude without saying a word in deprecation of the too common practice of giving concerts of sacred music under the name of "services of praise" - musical performances which are services in no sense of the word. A farrago of anthems, choruses, hymns and songs does not become a service by being interposed between one or two passages of scripture and a couple of irrelevant collects. These performances are a travesty of worship - depressing to the spiritual life of a congregation and hurtful to the devotional tone of a choir. They defraud devout worshippers of the due opportunity to worship to which they have a right. From every point of view they are objectionable and ought to be interdicted by the proper authorities.

J. M. Nisbet, *Op. Cit.*, p 219.

[17] 'Obituary', *Transactions of the Scottish Ecclesiological Society Vol. XI, Part II*, p xii.

noblest gifts of sacred harmony which her Lord bestowed on singer and musician'[18] is one to which many church musicians can respond. Regrettably his was rather a lone voice in the wilderness.

Unlike Nisbet, most leading musicians in late 19th-century and early 20th-century Scottish church music had "agendas" other than liturgical ones. Few of these men were career church musicians - their main interests lay in other areas, particularly school education, if for no other reason that music outwith the church provided the bulk of their income. For them the "moral qualities" of good music were as least as important as its usefulness in the sanctuary - a view probably shared by clergy and congregations alike. A suspicion that these musicians also believed with Hely Almond and Inspector Middleton that music was a useful tool in creating a well disciplined and "convergent" society is given substance by their attitudes on promotion to senior educational administrative posts.

Many leading Scottish organists in fact were not organ or choral specialists as such, but school music teachers who acquired competence on the instrument as useful "CV enhancers"[19] *en route* to becoming Inspectors, Teacher Training College Lecturers and Local Education Authority Advisers. Even on the rare occasions when an organist was a noted virtuoso player who could have been expected to make a very satisfactory career as performer and conductor, the call of secular music could prove inexorable in Scotland. Where in England the first organist of Coventry Cathedral, David Lepine, would quickly drop the School Music administration portfolio which originally came with the post, in Scotland the distinguished organist, John Dalby, had resigned from St Machar's Cathedral, Aberdeen, with similar dispatch on becoming City Music Superintendent.

As educational administrators the "school teacher/organists" certainly seemed to share Stephen's ambition (which any school music teacher during the "Music Adviser Ascendancy"[20] will confirm) to 'unify and control' any musical situation confronting them (see p21), The roots of 'top down' direction in Scottish Church

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[18] J. M. Nisbet, *Op. Cit.*, p219.

[19] James Easson was appointed to Holy Trinity, St Andrews, as a 'combined appointment' with Madras College in 1922, *Holy Trinity Minutes*, 20 11 1922.

[20]

> As Director of Music, he wielded a powerful influence and James Easson recalled how he [David Cargill Walker] 'literally policed the schools of Fife' to ensure that 'both sight singing and modulator exercises were being properly conducted'.

I. Macdougall, *Op .Cit.*, p239.

Music can confidently be ascribed to these musicians who believed that only they and their fellow professionals were those with the authority to prescribe what was good and what was not.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, to find more than a hint that "school teacher/organists" believed that to make progress in church music, congregations should be regarded as large music classes and not particularly able ones at that. In the following, "the teacher of a backward class" could be substituted for the 'conductor of a congregational practice' without further qualification:

> The conductor of a congregational practice must be ever ready to adapt himself to circumstances. He must be patient and tolerant. He must accommodate his thoughts, his language, and his gestures to those whom he is training.[21]

Ralph Vaughan Williams had articulated the musical beliefs of these young, well trained musicians in the first part of the 20th century in his famous preface to the *English Hymnal* (1906):

> Is it not worthwhile making a vigorous effort today for the sake of establishing a good tradition? Especially should this be the case with children's hymns. Children at all events have no association with any particular tune, and incalculable good or harm may be done by the music which they sing in their most impressionable years.[22]

This contrasts very strongly with the lack of crusading ardour behind the original 1899 Church Hymnary which, for reasons to be shortly discussed, was not overly concerned with issues of good taste. In an arena where Vaughan Williams and others were to regard the child as the agency for improving future hymnology - and quite probably musical refinement in general - *CH* concedes defeat without a punch being thrown [my underlining]:

> While seeking from all available sources the music best adapted to each hymn, the Committee felt it necessary in some instances, <u>especially in the section for the young, to adhere to tunes recommended by long association</u> with the hymns to which they are set.[23]

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[21] H. Wiseman, 'Congregational Singing' *Manual of Church Praise*, p157.
[22] 'Introduction', *English Hymnal*, px.
[23] 'Preface', *Church Hymnary*.

This comment might be found particularly surprising since the Music Editor, Sir John Stainer, was also Inspector of Teacher Training Colleges for Scotland with, presumably, responsibilities to "musically uplift" the community. It has to be said that Stainer's taste could be a variable feast in matters of hymn tunes - he was a great admirer of those by Dykes for example - and he was presumably appointed not only because he happened to be around in an official capacity but because he was the possessor of a "safe pair of hands". Even in the late 19th century one imagines an eye had to be kept on potential sales for any new hymnbook.[24]

The "Christian agnostic" Vaughan Williams[25] was probably as much concerned with children's aesthetic as with their spiritual development and it would be surprising if Church of Scotland school teacher/organists like Herbert Wiseman, Kenneth McLeod and James Easson had not shared similar priorities at least to some extent - if for no other reason than the scant opportunities to use liturgical music imaginatively and effectively in most Scottish Churches.

All three were competent composers and excellent arrangers of children's songs. Through their appointments as Musical Advisers/Superintendents to various authorities - Easson in Dundee, Wiseman in Edinburgh - or Directors of Music in the Teacher Training Colleges (McLeod in Moray House) these "school teacher/organists" wielded considerable influence on the musical tastes of their communities. "Convergent good taste" was enhanced by singing assured quality songs in a disciplined environment. Their enthusiasm for Competitive Choral Festivals can be ascribed to a wish that vocal standards were being, and were being seen to be, maintained. In their quest for "convergent good taste" Wiseman, McLeod and Easson were extraordinarily prolific producers of song books and

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[24] Stainer was not only an outstanding writer of hymn tunes but a realist in church music matters:

> The true estimate of a hymn-tune cannot be found by principles of abstract criticism or by internal evidence that it exhibits an artist's handicraft. There is something indefinable and intangible which can render a hymn-tune not only a winning musical melody, but also a powerful evangeliser.

The Guardian, 31 10 1900, quoted in I. Bradley, *Op. Cit.*, p203.

[25]

> He was that extremely English product, the natural conformist with a conservative regard for the best tradition... There is no lack of sincerity in his religious music, almost all of which is strongly affirmative. The atheism of the undergraduate was replaced with a more mature Christian agnosticsm, as Sir Steuart Wilson has brilliantly described it. He had a deep-rooted humanitarian faith: beyond that, he would not go.

M. Kennedy, *The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, p42.

teaching material - particularly sight-singing texts[26] to which all the schools in their fiefdoms were the unsolicited beneficiaries.

Dr Herbert Wiseman (1886 -1966) was the most interesting and distinguished of this group. He was the son of an Episcopal Clergyman, Dr James Wiseman (Rector of St Machar's, Bucksburn and Dean of the Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney), and was educated at Aberdeen University (M.A.) and the Royal College of Music of London. He held various organ positions (including Holy Trinity, St Andrews [1908-20] where one of his successors at both the church and Madras College was James Easson [1922-38]). He then became Director of Music, Edinburgh Education Committee and finally Head of Music, BBC, Scotland. He was an 'active adjudicator'[27] (in fact the present writer owes his single competitive musical success to Wiseman) and a popular and successful broadcaster.

The synergism of Wiseman and his collaborator W. H. Hamilton's views with those of Vaughan Williams can be seen in the Editorial Preface to their book, *Children Praising*. Hamilton castigated much verse that had 'given service in older books (and) seemed utterly unworthy alike of worship and of any child's developing taste' and 'frankly' wished 'that before a revision of the volume is required a number of better hymns will have been found, or perchance made, to replace some now included'.[28] What Hamilton, Wiseman and Vaughan Williams would have made of such late 20th-century children's religious verse as *Noah's Ark stuck in the muddy, muddy muddy,* can best be left to the imagination. One again is left with a strong impression that the child's 'developing taste' was of greater moment than the exigencies of worship which, who knows, might be better served with songs of the *Muddy Muddy* genre.

Children Praising has 10 original melodies and numerous arrangements by Wiseman. All are done with economy and consummate musicality, so much so that the professional musician is forced to regret that children today are not regularly presented in Sunday School or Primary Class with such varied and high-quality material. Needless to say, the Vaughan Williams influence in the choice and treatment of the songs and hymns in *Children Praising* is all-pervasive, both in

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[26] H.Wiseman, *Folksong Sight-Singing Books.* J. Easson, *Philharmonic Sight-Singing Books..* It has already been noted that the centrality of sight singing in Scottish school musical education was a legacy of the church.

[27] P. Scholes, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Music,* p645.

[28] W. H. Hamilton and H. Wiseman, 'Editorial Preface', *Children Praising* .

material (folk tunes, chorales and so on), and in the chaste harmonisations and spare textures.

In the work of Wiseman and his contemporaries we see a willingness to pronounce and to prescribe on all matters, from choice of material to teaching régimes with little interest or sensitivity to other points of view. In common with most of his "school teacher/organist" colleagues, Wiseman conveyed the impression that his teaching prescriptions and beliefs had scientific status:

> A meeting or two before the children are invited to try a new hymn, it may be introduced as a solo by one of the teachers. The children will thus absorb the atmosphere [?] before they worry with technical problems, and this sense of atmosphere or mood is, after all, the most important thing. If it comes first, it is much more easy to grasp and to retain than if it is has to be superimposed on something upon which work from a different angle has been expended.[29]

Singing a song over once or twice to a group of children before they are taught it is hardly exceptionable advice, but the rest of the paragraph verges perilously close on verbiage.

In fairness to Wiseman, whose avuncular charm on BBC radio's *Singing Together* won him many admirers, he was left standing in the "unresearched assertion" stakes by McLeod,[30] whose impatience with what he perceived as the inadequacies of the school music teaching profession still has the power to irritate:

> Dr McLeod .. was frankly disappointed .. teachers shouted from the housetops about progress in musical instruction and culture; evidently oblivious to the fact that notation did not make music but music making created the desire and necessity of some kind of notation.[31]

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[29] *Ibid.*

[30] Not completely though:

> Mr Wiseman laid stress on the importance of pitch training, for rhythm is in the bone and marrow of nearly everyone but pitch must be built up, step by step on a co-ordinated plan.

Reported in 'St Andrews Secondary District (Music Section)', *Scottish Educational Journal*, 28 02 1936, p266.
Needless to say, one suspects there was no research evidence available upon which Wiseman could draw to support such an hypothesis.

[31] 'Personal: Dr Robert McLeod, O.B.E.', *Scottish Educational Journal*, 29 05 1942.

(Notation did make Western Music. Western music would not have developed the way it did without notation propelling new developments. Over the centuries notation has also allowed the musical to plan and develop their music and permitted the semi- and un-musical to perform - unlike other aurally transmitted world musics where only the very musical can participate.)

Perhaps more serious is the deference contemporary commentators accorded to such *ex cathedra* pronouncements as:

> Musical Education's great truism - "the ordinary listener does not hear in terms of interval but in terms of accent which carries the appropriate interval" - opened a wide field for experiment to any thinking teacher.[32]

It is hardly surprising that congregational members brought up in schools where no doubts were ever entertained over what was "good music" were usually prepared to accept the judgements of the *CH* and the *RCH* musical editors. By the time of *CH3*, however, congregations had become less willing to accept the dictates of such arbiters of musical propriety as Stephen, Wiseman and McLeod and their successors in the corridors of church music - or school music - power.[33]

Issues of taste and idiom had not really arisen in the original *CH*. It came at the end of a period of frenzied activity in what was then a dynamic and new form - the Victorian Hymn. Musical selections could be based on what was considered useful from a huge repertoire of tunes, most of which were in a contemporary but approachable style. As with today's church songs and choruses what was liked generally was a much more important consideration than "quality". This was not to be the case with its successor. Well over a quarter of a century after the death of Victoria, 19th-century hymns were to be viewed in a much more critical light before they were admitted to *RCH* . Realising its position as a "major player" in setting musical standards, the Church of Scotland was now fully aware of its responsibilities in ruthlessly excluding the meretricious and second-rate.

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[32] 'Religion and Music in the School', *Scottish Educational Journal,* 20 05 1938. p591. Charitably one assumes the Scottish Educational Journal reporter did not quite understand what McLeod was getting at here. In all probability neither did McLeod - unless he was misquoted of course. As it stands the remark is nonsensical.

[33] Many congregations declined to buy the book: e.g. Macduff Parish Church still uses *RCH.*

Excellence in the 1920s, when *RCH* was in gestation, was seen to reside in the Chorale, especially when harmonised by Bach, and in national folk cultures.[34] Above all it was seen in the eschewing of chromaticism. The then organist of Glasgow Cathedral, R. H. Clifford Smith explained chromaticism's deleterious effects in 1930 thus:

> I have said that modern Church music tends to be Diatonic in its character rather than Chromatic, and I would like you to appreciate that this gives a stronger claim upon our regard than the claim of the more Chromatic music of the Victorian era. The word "chromatic" is, as you know, of Greek origin, and is concerned with the idea of colour. Hence Chromatic music may be said to be "coloured music": it is more brightly coloured than the sober Diatonic music.
>
> I remember seeing in France a Triptych in one of the Churches whose outstanding characteristic was its colouring, which was of the most realistic description. The whole affair was in the worst of taste....[35]

These remarks echo those of William Dyce a century before:

> In the animadversions of Clemens Alexandrinus[36] on chromatic music the existence or at least commencement of the sentiment that terminated in the established use of the diatonic scale as that proper to the services of the church and led in earlier times even to a sparing use of the two semitones in that scale; nor is there anyone acquainted with Gregorian music who can help being sensible that it possesses the grave, sober, masculine, abstemious character which is pointed at in several of the quotations we have made.

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[34] The first decades of the 20th century saw a great interest in carols and folk music in general.
[35] R. H. Clifford Smith, 'Modern Ideas regarding Church Music', *Transactions of the Scottish Ecclesiologial Society*, 1930-31, p42.
[36] It is unlikely that Clemens Alexandrinus was an expert on Greek musical theory; by 'chromatic' he may have been thinking in terms of quarter tones (e.g the blue notes of jazz) or even of the 'enharmonic' division of the fourth into notes of less and more than a tone. He certainly would not be thinking in the harmonic terms Dyce was most probably doing and, of course, Clemens was commenting on the, apparently, highly exuberant Byzantine - not Greek, church music. Dyce's views on the gravity, sobriety and so on of Gregorian chants are perfectly acceptable on their own terms and do not require sophistry to justify them. Dyce's lengthy discussion of chromaticism in his *Christian Remembrancer* articles shows that he was probably one of the 19th-century commentators to fall prey to the 'general danger' of regarding 2nd-century chromaticism as more or less the same as in the 19th. M. L. West, *Ancient Greek Music*, p3.

The most potent force in progressive music of much of the 19th century was chromaticism - however secular and sensual Dyce and Smith may have found it. Chromaticism in the 19th-century hymn was therefore merely a reflection, quite possibly only a very pale one, of contemporary music. Nevertheless dismissing chromaticism as merely a matter of taste perhaps was an early intimation that church music was unlikely to develop in tandem with classical music in the 20th century.

Nevertheless the impeccable musical integrity of *RCH*, which had come out just before Clifford Smith's article, and the inclusion of tunes by R. Vaughan Williams (which was more than *Ancient and Modern* was allowed to do), could allow this hymnbook the status of being among the finest of its - or any other - generation. If *RCH* only reflected current best practice, as demonstrated by the Vaughan Williams-style hymn tunes of the musical editor David Evans for example, it was influential and remained greatly respected for forty years. How little more musical leadership beyond that can in fact be exercised through publications is illustrated by *CH3*.

Some may see in *CH3* a heroic "Excellence's Last Stand" in Scottish Church Music which might have been successful had the battle been fought earlier in the 1960s. Others, including the author of the following, probably regarded the book as a rear guard action by conservative[37] elements in the church that was doomed to failure in the rapidly changing social and musical circumstances of the 1970s:

> The *Church Hymnary, Third Edition* and the *1979 Book of Common Order* proved to be the last of a long line of 'top-down' publications, intended to influence and shape the worship of the Church of Scotland. They were received by many as expressing a party line - theological, aesthetic and liturgical - which commanded the allegiance of a declining proportion of the Church[38]

It might be difficult to prove that the average congregational member was much concerned with the theological and liturgical 'party lines' subsumed in *CH3*, but it is relatively easy to demonstrate the general antipathy to the aesthetic stance which

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[37] In the eyes of many, promoting the classical music "new" is probably just as reactionary as promoting the classical "old" - even allowing that many non-musicians probably cannot tell the difference.

[38] D. Forrester, 'Worship since 1929', D. Forrester and D. Murray, *Studies in the History of Worship*, p187.

it took. Very little of the "new" classical music-orientated material in *CH3* is probably beyond the abilities of a congregation to perform given rehearsal and adequate leadership, yet none of it has become generally accepted[39] - unlike *RCH* where some tunes including a couple[40] by the editor, David Evans, have remained popular.

The book's clear intention to promote the best and only the best - as its compilers saw it - has alienated rather than persuaded, but in these respects *CH3* has to be judged as a product of its time which, it has to said, was possibly the most exciting and optimistic in Scottish classical musical history:

> The lively musical scene of the 1970s, with its splendid National Opera, several professional orchestras, its teaching facilities in an Academy of Music and Drama and music departments in all four ancient universities, and with its score or more of gifted composers....[41]

There were also great pressures on the compilers to preserve "traditional values" in the Scotland of the late 1960s and early 1970s, not only from the Church of Scotland itself but from the press, the *Daily Express* in particular, which was then conducting a campaign against the heterodox elements which were leading the Church astray.[42]

The popular was seen as divergent - a school teacher playing a piece of rock music in his classroom in the early 1970s might actually find himself a newsworthy item in the "quality" press. The attitude of the compilers of *CH3* in wishing to "ignore" popular music has to be seen in the context of the period.

The 'top-down' syndrome which permeates *CH3* can be summed up in the long-held view among educationists from Vaughan Williams and Wiseman in the early

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[39] As a very experienced church organist and school teacher who has taught all age groups from 5 to 18 years in every type of Scottish School (and hence played for innumerable services, assemblies and so on) the present writer has only only played 344 with the given tunes and 2 to alternative tunes out of the nearly 700 hymn and praise items in *CH3*. Of the modern commissioned hymns he has only ever played Wilson's *Stonelaw* and Leighton's *Dunoon* in services.

[40] *Lumetto, Lucerna Laudoniae.*

[41] C Thorpe Davie, *Op. Cit.*, p44.

[42] The present writer was somewhat nonplussed by the hostile atmosphere which greeted his attendance at one of the later meetings of the *CH3* Revision Committee. A nice smile and wave from the chairman, Dr Keir, immediately defused the animosity. Dr Keir later explained that the committee members had thought a *Daily Express* reporter had got into the room.

20th century to Arthur Jacobs[43] in the 1960s, and still very much alive in the 1970s, namely that "people like music they know; it is therefore incumbent on authority to ensure that the music they know is good". "Good music" is self-evidently something that transcends class and education and can be enjoyed by all. In fact "good music", i.e. classical music, is quite probably the most divisive of all the arts; it requires intelligence and sophistication from performer and listener and has increasingly become coloured by the usually oppressively middle-class ambiences in which it is presented. Over the last few centuries composers and performers may well have come predominantly from the lower middle and upper working classes, but patronage has always tended to have been the prerogative of a wealthy establishment. The resentment that "good music" (usually designated "snob music" in the schools of which the present writer has experience) can now cause in classroom and congregation has largely been either ignored or understimated by educationists, church musicians, compilers of hymn books and commentators. Even if this were not true, the amount of time the average person spends in church or school music classroom is a tiny fraction of the week; the possibility that taste can be either formed or changed by such superficial exposure is highly unlikely, particularly when many people seemingly cannot survive the day without an all-enveloping background of popular music. In the late fifties the BBC tried to encourage "good taste" by including Rossini overtures and other "improving" music in programmes like Saturday morning's *Children's Favourites* which, amazingly, some can recall hearing on bus trips to inter-school First Fifteen rugby matches! *Radio Caroline* soon put an end at such attempts at raising the "cultural tone" among the young, needless to say.

All those involved in music education or church music should be aware that "modern music" is understood by most people as a generic name for a whole raft of popular music genres - not just the "Top Twenty". The lack of headway which school music teaching based on "classical music" and the rejection of the "second-rate" was making in the 1970s can be illustrated by its "boring and useless" status often characterised as 'the unwilling doing the unnecessary for the ungrateful'.[44] If secondary school music had not changed course dramatically in the late 1970s the

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[43] Arthur Jacobs was Head of Music at Huddersfield Polytechnic. Although he does not appear to have ever been a schoolteacher he was quite prepared to postulate that in the 'era of *My Fair Lady*' mediant modulations were a 'common place' and that children's attention should be directed to 'matters which stimulate their interest directly '- apparently the changing time signatures of the *Rite of Spring*.
A. Jacobs, 'Something Special', *The Musical Times*, June 1964, p438.

[44] R. Witkin, *The Intelligence of Feeling*, p118, quotation not attributed.

subject would have collapsed. Chief Inspector Chirnside made the situation absolutely clear in a Scottish Education Department Newsletter when he detected 'clouds on the horizon which did not bode well for the future of class music'.[45] Traditional folk and art songs were finished - pupils declined to sing them, "creative music", despite much hype from the educationists, was only suitable for the type of child who collects driftwood from the sea shore to make wood sculptures, and classroom ensembles based on chimebars and keyboard mouth organs were too reminiscent of the primary class to have any credibility. The introduction of guitars, drumming classes and especially personal electric keyboards literally "saved school music". These instruments unequivocally announced to everybody that "modern music" - ragtime to Abba - had arrived in the classroom - they were suitable for nothing else. Perhaps the revolution in musical attitudes reflected in modern school classrooms is most tellingly illustrated by the resentment classical music now creates even in tertiary education circles. Classical music of whatever vintage is certainly not regarded as of universal significance, but something dangerously divisive and élitist in a multi-cultural society.

> Former Livesoc president and Current Vice-President Communications, Robert Poet thought that the University's [University of St Andrews] ignoring of amplified musicians was the result of musical snobbery: "Musicians who play in amplified bands represent and are relevant to a far larger section of students than players of more traditional instruments".[46]

Although it was recognised by youth evangelists and others soon after the Second World War that some concessions to "modern music" would have to be made by the churches, the process was not particularly welcomed even by those responsible:

> The Evangelistic Campaigns which I have been privileged to conduct have been characterised by a great deal of singing, not only of old hymns, but also of modern choruses. We have received innumerable requests for the music of these Songs of Zion - hence this book [Hillenborough Hymns and Choruses]... This is not a collection of my favourite choruses. I personally prefer the old traditional hymns, but the fact remains that 85 young people out of every 100 prefer to sing choruses.[47]

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[45] A. D. Chirnside, reported in 'Music for All', Central Committee on Music. *Newsletter No.1* , 1980.
[46] *The Saint*, 11 10 2001, p3.
[47] T. Rees, 'Forward', *Hildenborough Hymns and Choruses* .

The first attempt to introduce popular musical idioms into mainstream 20th-century church music came with the *20th-Century Church Light Music Group* . The group's leader, Fr. Geoffrey Beaumont (1905-1971), whose *20th-Century Folk Mass* (1956) caused a furore, had written music as a student for Cambridge Footlights Revues which for the guardians of propriety, needless to say, disqualified him from more serious musical activity. A distaste for Beaumont and his colleagues' efforts was sometimes rationalised by protestations that the Group's music was not really popular but "naïvely out of touch with current styles". Modern music, "by definition", had to be newly composed[48] to qualify for inclusion in the popular canon.

The criticisms were usually vitriolic. The following was published in 1972 when *CH3* was going to press:

> It has taken responsible musicians, the reforming agencies, and the R.S.C.M. upwards of half a century to rid Anglican church music of the worst of Victoriana. It seems doubly regrettable that just when they have achieved success, Beaumont and others should deliberately and cynically inject a new and perhaps more virulent poison into the mainstream of church music. Their responsibility is heavy - and so is that of those who, for the sake of mere novelty, introduce and perform such things.[49]

The perceived sexual overtones of popular rhythmic styles entering the church also worried commentators:

> The pop-singer appears in Ezekiel 33.22; where the 'very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument' (which was the simile for preaching without fruit) mistranslates the adjective describing 'song'; its original is again, 'pertaining to doting acts of love'; showing us that then, as now, the popular song was 'pre-occupied with the anticipation or remembrance of the consummation of pre- or extra-marital love.[50]

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[48] For example:

> Fashions in pop music change often and swiftly and if church music is to remain in contact, it must be ready to switch quickly from one style to another- bepop, skiffle, rock'n'roll, trad, beat, 'folk' and so on.

K. Long, *The Music of the English Church,* p433.

[49] *Ibid.,* p434.

[50] C. Cleall, *Music and Holiness,* p63.

Even if the sexual content was not obvious:

> ... it is really not unfair to say of most of the so-called 'Light' music, which never claimed to be great music, that it does not chime with that aspect of the Church which says 'No' to Satan; those who promote it are over-anxious to represent the Church as saying 'Yes' to everything, and the assumption that the Church can never be right if it is in dispute with the secular world is one that, in logic, let alone theology, nobody has the right to make.[51]

Writing like this reveals a mounting worry that things, especially the behaviour of the young, were getting out of control in post-World War II society. In general before the late 1950s and the 60s, "youth" had not been considered a threat to the existing social order. Young people knew their place and were deferent to their elders. The undisciplined, sexually promiscuous, and "lowest-common-denominator" youth culture of the late sixties, when *CH3* was in gestation, seemed to be taking over society - let alone infiltrating the church. Youth-inspired eruptions such as the US Segregation and Vietnam draft protests and the Paris Riots of 1968 were deeply upsetting, not to say frightening. For an older generation which had made considerable sacrifices in the World Wars to preserve civilisation, the disregard for "traditional values" was at best ungrateful.

The final straw was having actually to endorse young people's music:

> The growing public approval of the new cult of youth - if youth likes jazz, then it must be good; the supreme crime, in politics and culture alike, is not to be "with it". Let us pause an instant, and see exactly what we mean by this 'youth'. Those who flock round the [Beatle]s, who scream themselves into hysteria, whose vacant faces flicker over the TV screens, are the least fortunate of their generation; the dull; the idle; the failures.[52]

Those who found the music of the Beatles genuinely exciting and innovative in the early 1960s may not recognise themselves in the above portrait, but will have to accept that, as models for young people, the members of the group were far from ideal.

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[51] E. Routley, *A Short History of English Church Music*, p108.
[52] C. Cleall, *Op. Cit.*, p65.

Needless to say commentators apparently declined to accept that the gentle "up-tempo" idiom - specifically variety theatre - favoured by Beaumont, Appleford and others not only had roots in the 19th century but enjoyed a credibility which was to last well into the 1970s (e.g. Black and White Minstrel Show). It probably is still the only idiom with across-the-board appeal and performing practicality.

Composers like Shostakovich *(Jazz Suites)*, Stravinsky *(Ragtime)*, Milhaud *(Création du Monde)* and many others had successfully incorporated popular idioms and procedures into their music - if only occasionally; there should therefore have been a reasonable chance of writing hymns with characteristic popular rhythms but with "classical music" harmonies and melodies. In fact this proved very difficult - if not completely impossible - to achieve in practice.

Popular music has its own stylistic integrity which is very difficult to sustain if it is subjected to "classical music" harmonic and textural processes. A "number" purporting to be in *rock and roll* style but which does not keep to twelve-bar blues harmonies and use appropriate bass patterns sounds awkward and amateurish. Most popular music since the 1960s has been written by untrained musicians (none of the composers in the ranks of the Beatles or Abba could read music for example) and much of the freshness of their work lies in the unselfconscious use of the "corny" and "predictable".

The first "pop church cantata" for schools, the *Daniel Jazz*, however, was written by a highly regarded "serious" composer, Herbert Chappell (as it happens for a preparatory school where the writ of a Local Education Department Music Adviser did not run). The piece caused a minor sensation when it came out in 1963. Its mixture of witty libretto and jazzy-ish harmonic vocabulary married to classical music procedures (e.g. there are some reminiscences of Britten's *Golden Vanity*) was much enjoyed by pupils. It was soon completely eclipsed, however, by the more thorough-going popular musical idioms and less sophisticated but more "people-friendly" libretto of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* [53] by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice - despite its being an obvious imitation of Chappell's pioneering effort.

Vachel Lindsay's poem which was the basis for the *Daniel Jazz* has memorable lines of a type which sophisticated minds find amusing but which are lost on the more

[53] Also written for a preparatory school - Colet Court in London!

"literal". Here the latter assumes that King Nebuchadnezzar did run a dance orchestra - not that Daniel was palace CEO:

> Daniel was the chief hired man in the land,
> he served up the jazz in the palace band.

Rice's wit is more direct and "contemporary" in its use of slang ('pile') and the modern vernacular ('percentage').

> Potiphar had made a huge pile
> owned a large percentage of the Nile
> Meant that he could really live in style ...

The difficulties and tensions in reconciling "popular" with "classical" which the *Daniel Jazz* reveals in both its music and words are all too easy to see in "modern" hymns. The occasional self-conscious syncopation or jazzy chord, not to mention references in the text to nuclear fission, for example, does not make a hymn "contemporary". The syncopated cadences in Gary L Miles' *On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry* (*WOV* 199ii) make the tune sound as if it was destined for a review satirising "trendy clergy" rather than the church. Eric Reid's *Trotting* (*WOV* 187) is much more successful, but the flat side modulations in the second half are almost a caricature of early 20th-century hymn tune practice despite the jolly rhythm. This is not to say that attractive contemporary classical idioms might not have "caught on" had they been introduced in the vibrant 1960s.

If UK industry managed to snatch defeat out of the jaws of victory in the 1960s, the same may be said of Scottish Church Music. The period 1955-1965, as well as producing the Dunblane group, saw four exceptional creative musicians working in the Scottish Church: Cedric Thorpe Davie, Frederick Rimmer and Reginald Barrett-Ayres at St Andrews, Glasgow and Aberdeen University Chapels and John Currie at Govan Parish Church. If Thorpe Davie's obdurate reactionism and Rimmer's espousal of the avant-garde were unlikely to have a wide constituency in the Scottish church at large, the music of Barrett-Ayres and, especially, Currie might have provided the starting point for a revitalised "classical music" hymnology in Scotland.

As is the case for many organist-choirmasters, Currie's appointment to Govan came about more by chance than by premeditation. He had played at various churches in Glasgow when he was a music student at the RSAMD. Govan, since the days of John MacLeod, had run a daily service and Currie's first encounter with the church was when he started playing the organ for them. The offer to become Organist and Choirmaster came timeously when he embarked on a combined English/Music Honours Course at Glasgow University, but Currie was 'supported to the hilt'[54] in his work by the two 'non-musician' ministers of his time at Govan, Orr and Symington.

Currie did not feel it was a prestigious post (like Glasgow Cathedral or Paisley Abbey) but he was aware and proud of its famous ministers John Macleod and George Macleod and of its important place in the history of the Scoto-Catholic movement.

As has already been noted, Govan had choirboys but by Currie's time they were more 'decorative' in their cassocks and ruffs than utilitarian and presumably did not have much development potential. Currie was in fact anxious to use the available talent in the congregation and must have founded, if not the first, at least one of the very earliest Scottish praise groups. He taught the recorder at the Pearce Institute, and since he had to create ensembles from scratch this was a also a useful source of players.

The church did have a good grand piano - Currie was not an organ enthusiast and did not consider its influence on Scottish church music particularly fortunate - and there were some skilled instrumentalists in the congregation, a very able bassoonist among them, upon whom he could call.

Currie's practice was to compose for the available resources. Since the players knew that a part had not only been specially composed for them but was critical for the ensemble, they tended to turn up loyally. This *Gebrauchmusik* was composed early on Sunday mornings and rehearsed at 10am. The pieces were sometimes based on an existing tune - an offertory made out of a French carol tune which was sung in unison with dance-like ritornellos for example - or may have been completely original. The congregation had bits to sing and was rehearsed for this.

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[54] All quotations attributed to John Currie come from a conversation the present writer had with him on 20 01 2000.

As a church musician Currie favoured a 'simple but strong and quite discordant idiom'. A greater sympathy for the 'gritty antiphons' of Gelineau than for those of the more "anglified" Dom Gregory Murray is apparent in Currie's own psalm settings at Hymns 21 and 66 in *CH3*. Another French musician to influence Currie strongly was Jean Langlais. Echoes of Langlais's *Dieu, nous avons vu ta Gloire* [469] can be heard in Currie's three *CH3* hymn tunes, *Orb* [399], *Bute* [411] and *Carrick* [453]. Currie's attachment to the Langlais style is significant but unsurprising. Of the major organ composers of the 20th century Langlais has produced the most consistently practical and approachable body of work. Many organ teachers find pieces like *Le Saint-Esprit, Incantation pour un Jour Saint* and the *Te Deum* ideal for introducing their pupils to high quality "modern organ music". Langlais often used plainsong as a basis for his improvisations and compositions - each one of the pieces just noted quotes plainsong "verbatim" at some stage. Currie's sympathy for plainsong - he made himself 'confident in reading four line neumatic notation' at an early age - may not be deliberately displayed in his hymn tunes, but the generative phrase in *Bute* is certainly *sui generis.* The worlds of the French Worker Priest and Taizé, also resonated with Currie, whose own Plymouth Brethren upbringing had left him with a vigorous 'pietistic' attitude to church music. Despite protestations that he 'preferred church choirs behind screens' Currie was keen to make use of the Govan building, putting trumpeters in galleries and so on, and he was not averse to the prospect of liturgical dance which he thought 'would have come inevitably'!

In one very important respect Currie's views coincided with those of Thorpe Davie. Both did not wish the Church of Scotland to ape the Anglicans, musically or liturgically, but wanted its music to have the 'strength of the old psalm tunes'. It has to be said that Currie did actually put his vision into practice.

The Govan musical programme perhaps should have had wider influence on the church.[55] Approachable contemporary classical music idioms were probably acceptable in the 1960s Scottish Church, despite the revolution in popular music then taking place. It was certainly possible in primary and secondary schools to introduce tuneful, rhythmically alive but "discordant" contemporary music for church use. The present writer recalls teaching primary school classes Britten's *Psalm 150* for a service in Longstone Church, Edinburgh, and younger secondary

[55] The Aids to Devotion Committee did however publicise his work, notably in a memorable Demonstration at Greyfriars Kirk, Edinburgh during Assembly Week 1967.

pupils *Canticles of the Virgin Mary* by Michael Hurd, *Mary Magdalene* by Christopher Steel and Britten's *Missa Brevis* for 'Music in Worship' in what was then the Candlish Memorial (now Polwarth) Church, Edinburgh. Time has charitably erased any recollections of these performances but they seem to have been enjoyed:

> The school choir performances of music ranging from the 13th century to Peter Maxwell Davies' *Fader of heaven* (not to forget Pergolesi *Stabat Mater* and Michael Hurd's *Missa Brevis*, which were also performed in St Giles' Cathedral), gave insight into the high standard of music attained in our schools today. Other works presented by schools included... Britten's *Psalm 150*. [The Pergolesi and Hurd were performed by an independent girls' school.][56]

One does not have to agree wholeheartedly with Routley and Cleall in their suspicion that "only the best is good enough" was ceasing to have any relevance to many aspects of 1960s musical life, but the premise has some truth. However *CH3* arrived too late to provide the potential dynamic shot in the arm for contemporary classical church music that Currie had provided in Govan. Sadly as well, many of the commissions lacked the tunefulness and practicality of the Langlais/Currie model.

One of the hymn tunes for which the compilers of *CH3* had high hopes was Thomas Wilson's "gritty" *Stonelaw*. The present writer regularly played this magnificent tune on promotion trips for *CH3* in the late 1960s yet can only once recall ever hearing it being used in services outwith Greyfriars, Edinburgh where it was a particular favourite of the Minister, Stuart Louden. Reasons are not difficult to find; unlike a Currie tune the "critical" two first phrases are set very high and the discords are complex rather than simple and apposite. The mid-tune modulation is tricky for the average congregation member to surmount without an instrument - a good hymn tune should at least have the potential to be sung unaccompanied one suspects. The cross-rhythm in the accompaniment is difficult for the professional, let alone the amateur, player to bring off convincingly.

CH3 is conceived to have made no concession to a "modern music" orientated constituency, especially in its surely wrong view that "modern music" has to have a

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[56] J. Dickinson, 'Involvement', *Organists' Review*, January 1972. The performances referred to took place between 1967-1969.

high rate of turn-over to retain its viability and that to be accepted it should observe classical standards of "worth" rather than worryingly ephemeral "success". (One certainly wonders whether the definition of a hymn had needed to be so inelastic even in 1972):

> There are two main reasons for this. First the style of contemporary popular music changes so rapidly and dates so quickly that its inclusion in a book designed to be used for several decades could hardly be justified. No doubt contemporary popular music includes some material of permanent worth, but only the perspective of time will make it possible to sift the dross from the gold. But, secondly, much of the best contemporary popular religious music cannot in the generally accepted sense of the world be regarded as hymnology. For example, Sydney Carter's 'Lord of the Dance' and Friday Morning (both of which were considered by the revision committee) are religious songs of real distinction and one may suppose of permanent worth...[57]

It is hardly surprising that the progressive elements in Scottish church music now regard *CH3* as the last - if quite possibly the most distinguished - hymn book for the scholar and aesthete but now wish to explore new avenues.

Increasingly the Scottish Church has to take into account the musical background and attitudes of the large number of congregational members who have been brought up in the "modern music" orientated classroom. In a post-devolution era the Church also has to be very aware of Scottish sensibilities in its use of "Anglican orientated" material whether classical or modern. Some of the musical implications for the Church Of Scotland arising from "nationalism" and current educational practice in the schools are therefore discussed in the final chapter.

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[57] I. Pitt-Watson, 'The Music', *Handbook to the Church Hymnary Third Edition*, p72.

Chapter 9

Whither excellence?

Summary

The indifference with which the commissions in CH3 *were greeted by the Church of Scotland has emphasised the importance of accessibility to contemporary church music. It is certainly no longer possible to maintain the belief, still cherished by some church and school music commentators, that everyone is responsive to high quality music in any style. Not surprisingly therefore, an accessible repertoire of songs and hymns -"non-élitist" and "relevant to the culture of those using them" - is increasingly seen as essential for today's Scottish Church. Rather than building on existing high standards in hymnology, however, accessibility has often become an excuse for the mundane and poorly crafted. Hence those, like the* Wild Goose Worship Group *for example, who are anxious to provide high-quality worship material which respects Scottish sensibilities in a "devolution era" are having to do so under inauspicious conditions. In fact making Scottish church music more "Scottish" is likely to be just as much an imposed process as making it more classical.*

One would be surprised if John Calvin's views on church music were not widely shared by many members of the Reformed Church in places like Scotland; certainly more than four centuries after they were written his comments still read very well - especially to those anxious to encourage excellence in church music:[1]

> Furthermore it is a thing most expedient for the edification of the church to sing some psalms in the form of public prayers by which one prays to God or sings His praises so that the hearts of all may be aroused and stimulated to make similar prayers and to render similar praises and thanks to God with a common love.[2]

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1 Which is perhaps just as well since Scottish *academia* seems unwilling to examine music in liturgy with any great urgency! In *Encounter with God - An Introduction to Christian Worship and Practice (2nd edition 1996)* by the New College, Edinburgh based team of D. Forrester, I. McDonald and G. Tellini, for example, there is no discussion of the role music play, or could play in the liturgy.

2 *Articles*, quoted in C. Garside, *The Origins of Calvin's Theology of Music, 1536-1543*, p8.

Until recently at least, Calvin's insistence that the music should be different from secular music - particularly the modern - would also be found entirely reasonable by many anxious to have the "best":

> His intention, as bold as it was novel, to break as decisively as possible with both musical past and musical present sets his theology of music apart from Luther. By the same token his intention to create an ecclesiastical music which was, insofar as such was possible, wholly new, marks the beginning of what would form the distinctive character of Calvinist psalmody, namely what Blankenburg has designated "the sacred style". By this he means that Calvin was not so much concerned with the musical setting of a particular text as he was with a style "generally fitting the sacred service", and this, in fact, Calvin would achieve in the melodies of the Genevan Psalter.[3]

As was pointed out earlier in this study[4] the harmonies that were applied to the melodies in arrangements by musicians like Claude Goudimel (d1572) represented the state-of-the-art in classical music. Unlike Luther who was happy to embrace modern music ("why should the devil have the best tunes"), Calvin firmly rejected the popular. As the following makes clear, promoting a style "generally fitting the sacred service" was still a matter of urgency to one commentator in 1960; quite probably Calvin would share his suspicion that modern music undermined people's capacity to 'think and feel finely':[5]

> Suppose we are permitted to present music of worth: in the beginning, there will be protests; not because people cannot understand it, but because it embodies the inescapable challenge of incorruptible integrity.[6]

Today accessibility (i.e. hymns and songs in modern idioms) is more likely to be regarded as 'incorruptible integrity' than excellence as decided by expert arbiters. Indeed classical music, as the "top down" characterisation of *CH3* noted in the last chapter recognises, is usually seen now as "alienating". This concern that insisting on classical music in church is an "élitist" aesthetic rather than a "democratic" religious concern has long been in circulation as Erik Routley pointed out in 1960:

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[3] *Ibid.*, p19.
[4] See page 14.
[5] C. Cleall, *The Selection and Training of Mixed Choirs in Churches*, p60.
[6] *Ibid.*, p61.

> Up to now it has been the rule that in the pages of a musical or liturgical tract the less courtesy is paid to the demands of good taste the better. The Christian, it has been assumed, must be less of a Christian if he is in any sense an artist, and the artist less of an artist if he is to be a Christian. So long as there is piety, aesthetic quality (in our field, musical quality) is secondary.[7]

As was argued in the previous chapter, there is of course a major difference in that attitudes to modern music have changed so vastly over the last forty years. Where, for example, the Beatles were once regarded by the average classical music commentator as "beyond the pale" their music is now seen as occupying a position of some significance in any assessment of 20th-century music. It has to be assumed, therefore, that the modern, not the classical, is the new orthodoxy in church music.

Other attitudes have also changed, particularly those towards community singing.

Music in church and school has been frequently compared in this study. In most Scottish schools, class singing is a thing of the past and where a school or, more usually a local education authority or region, does run a first-rate choir there is an underlying élitist exclusivity about the group which is encouraged by "prestige concerts" and national or international tours. Needless to say this is equally true of the church. During the Edinburgh Festival, St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral advertises choral services sung by its 'internationally renowned choir'[8] while the present writer is also very aware of the importance of an annual European visit to the recruitment and well-being of the University Chapel Choir for which he is responsible. At the root of this exclusivity is a feeling of solidarity and pride at being part of a distinguished secular choir or an association with a cathedral or a university which the "membership" is happy to "acknowledge". Much as it might be desired, there is now little evidence - certainly in the schools - to support assertions that everyone wants to be a member of a singing group unless there is this strong feeling of "belonging". At the end of a long career as a music teacher the present writer would therefore find it very difficult to endorse the following comments by John L Bell (my underlinings):

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[7] *Ibid.*, 'Forward', p5.
[8] *Organists' Review*, August 2002, p295.

> Of all the arts music opens itself to the greatest degree of participation and creativity. A painting can be seen by everyone. It is a passive experience, not a physically demanding one. A play can be read or performed by actors, but not everyone will speak at the same time, and for its best performance it needs good rehearsal and an attentive audience. ... But when we come to music, and especially to community singing, there is no particular requirement of expertise, nor is there the need for a passive audience. All can participate.[9]

While the assertion may have been reasonably true forty years ago when, for example, the present writer discovered that his first class as a school music teacher - a group of five-year-olds in a deprived-area primary school - had nearly half-an-hour's repertoire of nursery tunes; thirty years later, a purely instrumental régime had to be conducted in most primary and secondary school classrooms which, in itself, must be symptomatic of changed attitudes. Needless to say the gifted and charismatic like Bell himself. can achieve much chorally with the willing untutored:

> The first thing one notices is that all people [at a Wild Goose Worship Group Last Night Out] are expected to sing, not just an occasional hymn but throughout the service, during acts of praise, in preparation for intercessions, and in response to the Word. Those assembled (not an offical congregation) learn a variety of songs on the spot related to the theme. Members of the *WGWG* lead everyone in four-part singing, in many cases without written music. This is not the usual church fare with organ and Victorian hymns, but unaccompanied singing of folk songs from Scotland and Ireland and songs of the world church, along with newer tunes prepared by the *WGWG*.[10]

But a willingness to sing has never been universal in Scottish Churches, as Mainzer for one noted.[11] Indeed comments from the past suggest that the Scottish experience is that, where hearty singing is sought, it is more likely to materialise with organs than without - as Alfred Hollins discovered for himself in St George's Free, Edinburgh[12] and Christie Jupp had pointed out to him by the North Leith Session[13] a century ago. Congregations left to fend for themselves musically do not always find unsuspected reservoirs of talent: usually the reverse, as demonstrated by the number of "musical" Anglican congregations in Scotland today who, despite the presence of a competent

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[9] J. L. Bell, *Op. Cit.*, p75.
[10] C. M. Hawn, *Gather into One praying and singing globally*, p110.
[11] See page 9.
[12] See page 67.
[13] See page 140.

organist, read rather than sing the services when their choirs are absent. It is certainly debatable that even with superb leadership congregations would be willing to bare their spiritual and musical souls in the way that those who opt to attend a *WGWG* Last Night Out or Big Sing are obviously prepared to do. At least some Church of Scotland congregational members might well be very uncomfortable with 'symbols. media and movement', and possibly fewer still actually find them an aid to the learning of new musical repertoire:

> By depending less on the spoken word and more on a variety of symbols, media and participatory forms of music and movement, the liturgies of the *WGWG* encourage a higher degree of secondary orality balancing sequential analysis with the "totalizing" effect of the experiential.[14]

Dispelling inhibitions might enhance the learning process in music but it is unlikely that the *WGWG* or any other group has been vouchsafed a unique insight into musicality. Indeed, anyone who has spent many years in school music teaching will have been offered innumerable nostrums to improve aural acuity, sight reading[15], choral excellence and so on by commentators who often, like the following, mutually contradict each other. Bell relies on 'chironomy' and rote:

> Human beings find it easier to imitate another human being than to copy a 12 string guitar, grand piano or pipe organ. They also pick up the pitch and the rhythm of the notes when they are signed in the air [chironomy] much more easily than when they are merely sung.[16]

On the other hand, Timothy Hone believes that it is the 'mystique' surrounding musical notation that needs to be swept away before the 'quality and quantity of memorised material' can be increased:

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[14] C. M. Hawn, *Op. Cit.*, p 211.

[15] One of the more disengenuous of these was the sight singing methodology promoted on the present writer's teacher training course at Moray House, Edinburgh. The teacher was instructed to write up the start of a well known tune on the blackboard and then compose an alternative ending. Fairly predictably, in practice the children then sang the well-known tune in its entirety!

[16] C. M. Hawn, *Op, Cit.*, p150.

> ... the mystique surrounding musical notation needs to be swept away by an educational provision which makes elementary musical literacy as fundamental as basic verbal and numerical skills.[17]

For a long-serving teacher of the "averagely gifted" neither statement rings particularly true. Much experience and research suggest to the present writer that most people have limited aural capacity, have difficulties in reading staff notation and learning new music whatever teaching strategy is employed. If there was a way of sweeping away "mystiques" and so on one could guarantee they would have been discovered and employed in the schools long ago.

The decrease in the number of choral unions and church choirs and falling membership of those that remain suggest that, increasingly, making music is regarded by the "averagely musical" person as something for those with "ability". It also goes without saying, of course, that ability in any activity is something which is just as likely to excite resentment as admiration among those who do not possess it. Encouraging participation is likely to be a very delicate and sensitive process!

A reluctance to take part can only be exacerbated if there is a feeling that either superior musical values are being foisted on congregations or their present ones are being questioned:

> Well, reverend sir, how go things at St Praxed's?
>
> I'm afraid we're a little unsettled. You remember our homely musical ways and our hearty congregational singing? It had become quite a tradition, but I fear it will soon be a thing of the past, thanks to our new organist, against whom I have nothing to say except that he is far too good a musician for us simple folk.[18]

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[17] T. Hone, 'When in Our Music God is Glorified', J. Astley, T. Hone and M. Savage, *Creative Chords*, p150.
[18] H. Grace, *The Complete Organist*, p108.

Those with long experience as church organists are only too aware of how raw sensibilities can be in regard to church music - especially the modern.[19] Great care has to be taken in either embellishing or reharmonising modern hymns whose musical syntax might not always satisfy traditional standards of probity or indeed the dictates of modern style. Quite probably, for example, David Evans was trying to "rescue" *There were ninety and nine that safely lay* in his voluptuous *RCH* harmonisation, but the end result does not avoid a feeling of superciliousness towards a tune which *EH* was happy enough to print in its original form. The organist who ventures to re-harmonise a tune like the very popular hymn *Colours of Day* in a conscientious desire to provide more musical momentum may wonder if such efforts are a subliminal attack on modern music or that there is something special and apposite in the given chord scheme[20] which he or she has missed:

SGP Harmonisation (alternatives in *italics*):

F	| B flat	| B flat	| F	| F	|
F	| B flat	| C7	| F	| *d*	|
C7	| C7	| F	| etc.		
g	| C7	| F	| etc.		

Needless to say there are also risks in disregarding traditional disciplines and promoting the technically suspect as being more "accessible" and "sincere". One suspects that even the most unsophisticated listener is aware when something is poorly crafted or unstylish.

Whatever other shortcomings it might exhibit, the most mediocre Victorian Hymn tune is almost invariably appropriately harmonised and technically correct. Stainer may have consigned *Beautiful River* to the Appendix of *CH* and replaced it in the main part of the book with his own - as it happens uncharacteristically tuneless and awkward, *River of Life* - but neither he, nor apologists for the original tune (numbered among whom is

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[19] The present writer, for example, attracted the censure of the late Revd. Ian Pitt-Watson for detaching the bass notes in one modern hymn and the late Very Revd. Hugh O. Douglas for introducing some mildly cinema organist-type decorations in another. In both cases, these distinguished ministers felt that there was an element of contempt in the approach adopted - accusations which, it has to be said, were much resented at the time! Pitt-Watson, for example, assured the present writer that playing the pedals *staccato* was completely inappropriate in church.

[20] Presumably not its suitability for the guitar.

the present writer,[21] could point to any technical shortcomings in R Lowry's work. *Beautiful River* perhaps offends received wisdom by not modulating. This is also true of a modern hymn, much sung in Scotland, *There is a redeemer*, which has a large number of consecutive octaves and fifths. In certain cases the bold use of consecutives with their suggestions of folksong-like double-tonic progressions can only strengthen the impact of a melody - Vaughan Williams' *Come my Way, my Truth, my Life* in *CG* for example - but when a tune like *There is a redeemer* is in a typical "hymn configuration" there is at least a feeling of inelegance and, possibly to some listeners, an unpleasant aura of "inverted snobbery" in the rejection of "traditional values" in their use.

Elsewhere a greater respect for "implied harmonies" can only strengthen a good tune. Another hymn popular in Scotland, Martin Nystrom's *As the deer*, has a striking falling bass part at the words 'You alone are my strength', which gives a stylish and memorable climax to the tune. Unfortunately Nystrom uses the same bass movement at the start of the tune where it is at best infelicitious and, disappointingly, where it also compromises the whole structural logic of the tune by anticipating the climax. Merely by using the implied harmonies Nystrom's tune gains strength and integrity - this was certainly the impression the present writer had when he accompanied the magnificent singing of a URC General Assembly in this hymn using the "correct chords" in the first few bars. Quite possibly hardly anybody in the hall realised that anything was amiss, but the player certainly felt he had more control - certainly in getting the hymn off to a rhythmical start - when the chord progressions followed the dictates of traditional functional harmony.

Technical competence in partwriting might seem to be a minor matter in "up-tempo" hymn or song tunes composed by guitarists for guitar-accompanied performance but it becomes quite a serious one if even a very good tune is to sound convincing when keyboards or electric basses are to be employed. In many "up-tempo" hymns in current hymnbooks the bass is made to jump from one root position to another in the interests of "simplicity" and good "rhythmic attack" as in *You shall go out with joy* in *SGP*. Often easier to play and usually much more effective musically is to move the bass by step and use inversions as well as root positions. Stylish arrangements of "up-tempo" tunes in other words require the adoption of standard patterns like walking basses to make their maximum impact.

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[21] Attention could also be directed to Leighton's *Trio for clarinet, 'cello and piano* based on this tune.

All this suggests that excellence in musical craftsmanship, is as valid as ever and a policy of "no compromise" can and should be retained despite the increasing use of modern music in the churches. Nevertheless it is important not to be over simplistic or critical as the greater emphasise on personal creativity both within and outside the schools has created a different environment in which new music material has to be approached. There is now a greater emphasis on encouraging creativity among all people interested in music, whether or not they intend becoming professional musicians or composers.

Educationists like Swanwick and Witkin, for example, who have had tremendous influence on school music commentators[22] - if not so obviously on the actual schools - have strongly challenged traditional ideas in musical education and have both expressed concern at training 'instrumental operatives':[23]

> The point is not, however, that children should become instrumentalists but rather they should be able to build, and respond to, idea in sound. The ideal of such a process is to be found in the composer rather than the instrumentalist.[24]

If everyone is entitled to 'build in sound' there obviously has to be less emphasis on "pedantic" technical matters and on the evolution of genuinely personal idioms (but see below p239) in the evaluation of worship material - it would be presumably difficult for a Swanwick or a Witkin to agree that composition usually involves technique and skill, for example. Indeed the caution now expressed by Peter Aston, one of the leading advocates of "creative music" in the 1960s and 1970s schools, smacks of "reactionism" not to mention élitism:

> My own view is that all styles are acceptable provided that the music has artistic integrity ... A composition that is technically flawed is disturbing because the musical ideas, however interesting in themselves, do not hang together. A poorly constructed composition will undermine an act of worship as surely as a technically incompetent performance.[25]

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[22] And continue to do so, *q.v.* C. Davies, 'Music in General Education' *Creative Chords*, [2000], p215.
[23] K. Swanwick, *A Basis for Music Education*, p48.
[24] R Witkin, *Op. Cit.*, p126.
[25] P. Aston, 'Composing for Worship', *Church Music Quarterly*, June 2002, p19.

Nevertheless the creative music strategies in musical education over the last thirty or so years must have created a demand in the church for more personal musical expression and a more forgiving climate towards the less-than-secure technically - at least among those who regard "traditional craftsmanship" as an excuse for reactionism.. This might well be the experience of the *WGWG* whose music is sometimes the result of group improvisation though the end-product is polished by the leadership - usually Bell himself:

> The *WGWG* develops the songs as a part of a group creative process:
> - someone has an insight or an idea which excites others and informs or challenges faith..
> - somehow a tune emerges from a folk tradition or from midair...[26]

If "lower standards" are "inevitable" with modern music and creativity, possibly the future for excellence in Scottish church music lies in the Scots' own hands and in their own music.

Sally Harper, for one, is convinced that congregations can be responsible for their own music if they return to indigenous music. Referring to the *Wild Goose Worship Group* "no frills" material she notes:

> It is engaging and straightforward, often drawing on singable folk melodies. For smaller communities, there is the affirmation that good music is still possible without a traditional four-part choir, critical in a culture where such choirs have long since disappeared. Congregations too, can begin to recognize their own value as a musical resource, unaided by choir or instruments.[27]

One would be very surprised if some "Scotophile" members of today's Church of Scotland did not believe that, had the "musical straitjacket" of Anglican-style "excellence" not been imposed on the country during the 19th century, the Church's democratic and non-élitist traditions might well have expressed themselves in, *inter alia,* straightforward and approachable national psalm tune and song. If Scotland had been spared the Anglican musical hegemony - so a revisionist scenario might run - even a *WGWG* could have materialised decades earlier.

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[26] C. M. Hawn, *Op. Cit.*, p209.
[27] S. Harper, 'Music from the Iona Community', *Church Music Quarterly,* September 2001, p9.

In the recent past it was certainly possible to argue that part of the Scottish distrust of a wider church music repertoire had been caused by fears that national identity would be sacrificed with its introduction. The emphasis Millar Patrick placed on the cherishing of the old Scottish Psalms could be regarded as specially significant in this respect. His endorsement of the metrical psalms (and presumably the old Scots tunes) may well conceal a worry that a wider range of (probably "Anglican") music would compromise the "Scottishness" of services:

> The Tercentenary [of the 1650 Psalter] should awaken in all thoughtful people who are sensitive to tradition, and alive to historical as well as religious values, a pride which will induce them, with zealous vigilance and care, to preserve as far as possible in the Church's use this venerable instrument of their country's worship.[28]

Led by English musicians, late 19th-century developments in Scottish church music were inevitably "second hand Anglican" and, hardly surprisingly, "good" church music quickly became, and probably in some quarters remains, synonymous with English ideals - it will be recalled that the example of "best practice" in anthem singing noted in the Enquiry of 1905/6 was that of an English Diocese.[29] In the circumstances it would be difficult to believe that Scottish church music would have evolved at all if left to its own devices.

By the early 19th century many other European Churches were as musically unadventurous as the Scottish ones[30] - despite the vibrancy of the secular music in their countries. However, after the mid 19th-century crises visited on the Church everywhere, English congregational music took off with an energy and success that rarely could be found in other countries. It was almost inevitable therefore, that Scotland would be greatly influenced by what was happening south of the Border - even if her history of secular and sacred music had been as notable as some commentators would have their readers believe.[31]

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[28] Millar Patrick, *Four Centuries of Scottish Psalmody* , p226.

[29] See page 195.

[30] Blume notes the 'unanimity of opinion that Protestant Church Music [in Germany] declined after Bach' and that 'in 1817 (the 300th Anniversary of the Reformation) did not witness a new flowering'.
F. Blume, *Op. Cit.*, p319.

[31] Were there really enough psalms in late 16th-century use to justify the following (my underlining)?

> At the opposite end of the historical spectrum, the 'new' music of the Scottish Church became dominated by the practices of the Genevan Church, followed by the widespread adoption of Calvinistic vernacular psalmody in the wake of the Scottish Reformation.

Apart from the imaginative use of some Scottish folk tunes in *WGWG* publications it is difficult to avoid the suspicion that "anti-colonialism" in musical matters is much more of a motivating force within the group than "Scottishness" as such. Bearing in mind the non-élitist and democratic traditions of the country it would not be surprising if the most obvious "Scottishness" in *WGWG* material was the identication with communities in Africa, Asia and South America who also feel they have in the past suffered, and continue to suffer, from cultural - and economic - imperialism.

The comments of the distinguished Scottish composer, James MacMillan, reveal a distaste for aggressive national self-interest - especially that displayed by 'big gun' elements in English and French politics - which is possibly widely shared in the Scottish Churches [32] [my underlinings]:

> But MacMillan is himself a nationalist, a Scottish patriot - doesn't he [as a famous composer writing in an international style] see something of a contradiction there? "It's a different kind of feeling. The Scottish nationalist movement - to which I'm not an adherent by the way - is a very benign form of nationalism. It's quite mild - not like the big gun nationalism of Gaullism or Thatcherism. [33]

In the circumstances the reported wish of the compilers[34] of the latest edition of the *Church Hymnary* to be less "English" in its orientation is hardly surprising!

The cautious reader might have qualms in equating the twelve far-from-outstanding psalm tunes, actually used in the Church of Scotland for the best part of two centuries, with a 'widespread adoption' of 'new' music. Protestations that many psalm tunes of good quality were available in the early 17th century cannot alter the fact that, if they were not performed, they are almost irrelevant to discussions of Scottish musical history. To employ a parallel: a commentator, three centuries hence, would surely be on shaky ground if he or she were to base theories of late 20th-century Scottish Church musical taste and accomplishment on the contemporary classical musical material in *CH3* - much of it, like the post-Reformation Psalm tunes, actually originating outwith the country.

[32] For example:

> As Scotsmen, Bell and Maule participate in the paradox of having been the victims of imperialism as well as having perpretated oppression upon others. The Scottish experience with England has often resulted in the former, while Scottish immigrants to the United States have participated in the latter.

C. M. Hawn, *Op. Cit.*, p 214.

[33] Unattributed author, 'Harnessing extremes', *Gramophone*, May 1995.

[34] Comments to the present writer by members of the *CH4* Committee.

This need to "address issues" rather than "respect Scottish tradition" has probably led Bell to experiment with unaccompanied music in a variety of sometimes "alien" forms. John Knox, for one, probably would have been horrified by Bell's (admittedly restrained) use of call/response material (e.g *SGP* 1 and 5) if his objections to versicles and responses are anything to go by:

> This fear of the "idolatry" which Knox saw in any worship devised and defended by merely human ingenuity, holds the key to Knox's otherwise surprising allergy to particular parts of the 1552 Prayer Book, above all the versicles and responses in Mattins and Evensong.[35]

Bell's use of music in liturgy therefore cannot be claimed to have its roots exclusively (or possibly even partially) in Scottish practice, but has more likely evolved through his pastoral concerns and his experience of different religious traditions throughout the world. One also suspects that, Bell has a "sixth sense" as to what is going to work in liturgy and the ability to produce suitable music to ensure that it does. Nevertheless in his affection for metrical psalmody Bell is completely thirled to Scottish tradition in one respect at least; this, however, has not prevented him from regretting the doctrinaire in his or anyone else's tradition. Psalm settings have repeatedly:

> .... confronted him with the inadequacy of one formula - be that common metre, Anglican chant or Catholic antiphon - to express the sometimes pensive, sometimes dialogical nature of the original words and their intention.[36]

The innovatory nature of the *WGWG* approach to church music in psalm settings, hymns, anthems, calls/responses and so on cannot be doubted, so in this respect at least its claim to excellence is strong. It is necessary, nevertheless, to consider Bell's work as a composer to complete any evaluation of the overall excellence or otherwise of *WGWG* music.

Any composer has to evolve his own musical language. Most frequently this musical language has at its core current international stylistic concerns. In the musical world of the late 1970s, for example, if a composition was not atonal it had 'to be seen as a creative decision of some significance':

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[35] E. Cameron, 'The European Context of Knox's Reformation', R. A. Mason, *John Knox and the British Reformation.*

[36] J. L. Bell, 'Introduction', *Psalms of patience, protest and praise,* p1.

> Indeed Schoenberg's revolution may be said to have affected all western art music since 1908, for even if a great deal of tonal music has been written since that date (not least by Schoenberg himself), the abjuring of such a fundamental change is music has to be seen as a creative decision of some significance.[37]

Since the late 1970s there has been some softening of attitudes among the avant-garde and the more obviously ingratiating has been allowed - however reluctantly - to enter the canon of the acceptable. The music of Górecki and Tavener has been very successful with the public, for example, but is regarded with some suspicion, especially in academic circles, as being "populist".

Both Górecki and Tavener are religious composers with a sympathy for ecstatic mysticism which does not resonate with all church members. In the present writer's experience popular anthems like *Totus Tuus* and *Hymn to the Mother of God* can alienate as many choir and congregation members as they captivate. For repeated use in Scottish churches of all denominations something a little less "incense-laden" might well be more appropriate.

In particular for a composer like Bell, catering for a radical and "unchurchy" constituency, a pithy and robust musical language would seem essential. John Currie has also provided music which seemingly meets these requirements, but sadly his work has never become established in the affections of Scottish congregations. Bell's music, on the other hand, may well have become accepted through his imaginative editorship of two best-selling hymn collections, *SGP* [38]and *CG*, his own powerful hymn lyrics and his outstanding gifts as a musical *animateur* as much as for the appositeness of his idiom.

Bell's composing idiom relies heavily on diatonic sevenths. The antecedents of this particular preference (which was to a certain extent shared by the musical editors of *CH3* - notice the harmonisations of *Blessing and Honour and Glory and Power* and *Bunessan*) may lie in the music of say the Dunblane Group as exemplified by Reginald

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[37] P. Griffiths, *A Concise History of Modern Music*, p40.

[38] Bell's editorial judgement was however queried in *Organists' Review*, August 1988. Derek Baldwin ended his review of *SGP* with the words:

> Presumably somebody will, buy it. I hope so, for the sake of all concerned.

A comment that was rebuffed in the next issue by the Senior Music Editor of Oxford University Press, Julian Elloway, who reported that over 95,000 copies had been sold within five months of publication!

Barrett-Ayres[39] or in the English pastoral style of Vaughan Williams and Herbert Howells. Composers in the past have used seventh chords extensively - those who employed a "blanket" of diminished sevenths in their music, for example, range from Liszt and Parry to Poulenc - so there is nothing *prima facie* objectionable to Bell's affection for another version of the chord. It might also be suggested that, for someone wishing to provide a uniquely church music language in the John Calvin tradition, a heavily seventh chord-orientated idiom is at once contemporary and accessible (i.e. not too discordant) and appropriately distanced from the modern. While Bell's harmony at best can be extremely attractive - witness his treatment of *Brother James' Air* for example, some musicians might confess to a slight antipathy to a harmonic palette overly dependent on the seventh chord both for practical and aesthetic reasons. Seventh chords can be difficult to pitch and it might be wondered, for example, how many people in a Last Night Out or Church of Scotland congregation could sing the correct notes in the first chord of *Alleluia (Iona)* in *SGP* - a g7: a song which has the rubric (my underlining):

> This song is best sung unaccompanied, in harmony. [40]

Aesthetically, strings of sevenths can be very pretty but if associated with folk-tunes they produce a slighly generalised "folksy" tinge rather than something specifically regional. As the following comparison will make clear, there is also sometimes a tension in Bell's harmony between the implied chords and the colourful sevenths he has chosen which to at least one listener is not always completely convincing:

> *Kelvingrove* as given in *SGP*
> version 1 (Bell's chords)
>
> Will you let my love be shown. Will you let my name be known etc.
> F Bflat F g7 C
>
> version 2 (Bell's harmonisation)
>
> Will you let my love be shown. Will you let my name be known etc.
> g7 Bflat g7 a7 Bflat C

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[39] q.v. *Pityoulish* in *CH3*.
[40] *SGP* 5.

Inevitably Bell's music will be compared to that of the only two composers who have made a similar musical commitment to the Scottish Church - James MacMillan and Kenneth Leighton (1929-1988). The most obvious difference between them and Bell is in the matter of accompaniment. The present writer has probably over-laboured the point that in his experience[41] the average person's ability to learn music is considerably less than most commentators would appear to believe. Pitching notes in passages which are not firmly in the prevailing key can and usually do cause problems in unaccompanied part music. As MacMillan illustrates in his *Galloway Mass,* a "difficult to sing" major chord where a minor or "predictable" alternative might be expected can provide a colourful and memorable climactic point - the third 'Lamb of God' in the *Agnus Dei* for example. The *Galloway Mass* is in unison with a simple but haunting organ part; it would be difficult to envisage the practicality and subtlety of the setting being maintained if it was set out for unaccompanied performance and the filigree keyboard writing omitted. Leighton's unison *Communion Service* in *CH3* is much more robust and discordant though equally striking. Here again the singers are supported - this time by the doubling of the melody in the tenor part. It is the present writer's impression that Bell's harmonic and textural palette would be widened with a greater commitment to accompanied music, where paradoxically simple and imaginative progressions can be highly effective - as both MacMillan and Leighton have shown. It has been noted earlier that this assertion probably would be equally true for the music of William Dyce and R. A. Smith.

Bell has evolved an innovative and accessible musical language, makes creative use of available resources, encourages participation and in his texts address important contemporary issues. If the present writer cannot bestow his personal unqualified "imprimatur" on Bell's music its integrity has earned his complete respect. Nevertheless the present writer's suspicion is that modern music is now the genuine new music of the Scottish Church and that *WGWG* material, like classical music, is something that congregations will have to be either encouraged or trained to accept. [42]

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[41] The present writer's experience with a "come-all-ye" school choir does include performances of standard major choral works like Orff *Carmina Burana,* Britten *St Nicholas,* Poulenc *Gloria* and so on.

[42] At least one minister and academic (Dr Ian Bradley) who is much in demand as a preacher throughout Scotland and further afield shares a suspicion with the present writer that however popular *WGWG* material may be elsewhere it has still not "caught on" in Scotland to any great extent.

There are certainly dangers - to which some might believe that even an insightful commentator like Michael Hawn can fall prey - of regarding *WGWG* music as part of a popular 'resurgence of Celtic Tradition both within the British Isles and beyond these shores'. The present writer finds it very hard to find any evidence for a 'resurgence of Celtic tradition' in the UK: certainly any that could possibly support Hawn's view of *WGWG* material as being both Celtic and popular and hence something with which contemporary Scottish congregations could automatically identify:

> ... modal sounds have been picked up not only by [folk?] singers but also by popular dance groups both within the British Isles and beyond those shores. [43]

With the possible exception of "aggressively Scottish" groups like the Corries and Runrig - both now defunct - it is perhaps difficult to separate out such 'modal sounds' as pentatony and parallel chord movement from general international preoccupations in rock and pop music. One would be very surprised if rock and pop listeners ever notice folk influences in their music.

Bell, himself, is clearly aware that however appropriate it might be for Scottish hymns and songs to be set to Scottish folk tunes there is no tradition for so doing. Nor, it might be said, is there unequivocal evidence that the Gospel has taken root in third world folk music any more than it has in Scotland:

> We live in a country which has a glorious heritage of folk music, of fiddle and pipe tunes, of vocal melodies all in danger of disappearing into oblivion. But where are the spiritual songs which have clothed themselves in this musical richness? Why is it that Africans, Asians and Central Americans have allowed the Gospel to take root in their folk music, but we in Britain have, by and large, avoided such an association as if Christ had never joyed to see children piping and dancing in the street.[44]

Apart from noting that children might well pipe and dance in Scottish streets if the climate was a little more amenable, it would appear that most church music sung in third world countries is, in fact, local adaptations of European and American secular and religious music - so much so that in Jamaica, for example, hymns are apparently called 'sankeys':

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[43] C. M. Hawn, *Op. Cit.*, p 210.
[44] *Ibid.*

> The music of the Revivalist groups is very similar to black Protestant music of the southern USA, combining various types of traditional hymnody with an important body of 19th century gospel hymns. The influence of the latter in Jamaica is such that the hymns are referred to as 'sankeys' from Ira D Sankey, the American evangelist singer and lead musician associated with the revivalist group of Dwight L Moody.[45]

Making third world church music more indigenous may well be as an artificial a process as making Scottish church music "more Scottish", especially since Christianity is often an "intruder" in countries where Islam and other world faiths predominate. Hawn quotes one hymn book *Sound the Bamboo* where the traditional material appears to require special pleading and promotion:

> The hymns of Sound the Bamboo give witness to the cultural intricacies and diverse influences on Asians from beyond their borders. To this end Loh has divided the songs into four categories:
>
> 1. Western hymn styles
>
> 2 Traditional styles: adaptions of old native melodies from grass roots, or new compositions in more recent but still traditional styles, with or without accompaniment
>
> 3 Syncretistic styles: folk tunes or melodies with traditional characteristics but arranged with traditional Western harmony
>
> 4 International and contextual styles: innovative works combining native concepts or idioms with contemporary international techniques of composition, culturally contextual and challenging to modern people.[46]

Imposing musical styles - whether they be classical or folk - on the indifferent is certainly much more difficult than many appear to realise. However some commentators, e.g. the educationist Benjamin S. Bloom,[47] argue that anything can be taught to anybody if appropriate methodology is used. Accordingly school music has rarely been spared what one might characterise the "teacher might" syndrome. Employment of the word "might" in educational texts invariably means that the

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[45] G. Béhague, 'Latin America', *New Grove Vol 14*, p345.
[46] C. M. Hawn, *Op. Cit.*
[47] B. S. Bloom, *Alterable Variables.*

proposed strategy has not been tested; if it had, a detailed synopsis of the results gained from its deployment surely would be appended as a matter of course. The following is typical [my underlining]:

> Different members of the class might try to compose pieces using these limited resources and handsigns... Now we have some concept of colour we might listen to part of *Stimmung* by Stockhausen...[48]

Hawn offers 'an approach for liturgical renewal that is needed among mainline churches on both sides of the Atlantic' based on *WGWG* practice which perhaps reflects in its scope the idealised "learning outcomes" of the "teacher might" commentators:

> Balance prophetic insight with liturgical comfort. The security and comfort of liturgy must be authenticated by an awareness of those who experience insecurity, discomfort, and in its many manifestations - political oppression, racial discrimination, economic deprivation, gender exclusion, class struggles, etc.[49]

In particular three of Hawn's assertions seem far too sanguine and hence unlikely to have all that much relevance in advancing the cause of excellence in Scottish church music:

> Restore singing to the people.

However wrong-minded or patronising organists have been in the past, it is at least the present writer's experience in the second half of the 20th century that encouraging excellence in hymn singing has always been their chief concern. To suggest that there has been some sort of "conspiracy" among organists, choirs and presumably clergy to deprive congregations of opportunities to sing seems a bit sweeping at least. If people have been deprived of singing in church it is more likely their reluctance to participate rather than, *inter alia*, the shortcomings of organists or the irresponsibility of schools in no longer teaching songs and hymns in the music class.

> Allow singing to build and sustain the worshipping community by using as little accompaniment as possible.

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[48] K. Swanwick, *A Basis for Music Education*, p74.
[49] C. M. Hawn, *Op. Cit.*, p221. The complete text of Hawn's conclusions is given in the Appendix, p278.

This study argues that singing has always been an expression of community, not a way of creating it. Increasingly singing together is becoming a matter of indifference if not an embarrassment to many people, and it seems, at least to the present writer, that music may well become a very marginal element in building and sustaining the worshipping community. Where demonstrably music continues to be a successful evangelising aid, it is often in congregations with modern-style praise groups complete with "backing" of drums, amplified guitars, keyboards and soloists. Developing community in congregational singing is surely not a matter of "allowing" but "encouraging" people to take part - if that is indeed an appropriate priority for the 21st-century Scottish Church where "props" like music may no longer be necessary. While the employment or non-employment of instrumental accompaniment is to an extent a matter of choice, neither one nor the other can promote enthusiastic singing unless a willingness to work as a musical team is present.

> Explore the folk song resources of your region and acquaint yourself with them. These contain the essence of your culture.

This study has remarked how little sympathy many people have for music outwith their normal experience. Apart from practical matters of accessing material, therefore, it is difficult to see how the musically unsophisticated could explore local folk song resources with pleasure and profit. Certainly in places with somewhat tortured histories like Glasgow and Dundee the determinedly curious may well find the "essence" of the local culture, as revealed through song, uncomfortably bleak. Possibly the present writer would not be alone in finding a read-through of an important Dundee folk song collection[50] a depressing musical and literary experience.

Perhaps not only appropriate musical styles, but music itself, has to be imposed on the contemporary Scottish Church. In the past the pursuit of excellence may well have been partly a way of dodging fundamental questions about the role of music in the church. Where church music was seen to be enjoyed and proving a morale boost, however, a "if it is working do not mend it" strategy was sensible. In the very different circumstances of today, when any form of corporate activity is regarded with caution, a well-argued rationale for church music is required and is still awaited.[51] Sadly, one

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[50] N. Gatherer, *Songs and Ballads of Dundee.*

[51] As indeed is a rationale for school music. In 1966, B. Rainbow could write:

suspects that such a thing is unlikely ever to materialise not least because music, as was noted in the previous chapter, is extremely divisive despite its image as a "universal language understood by all". Even where music has strong local ties there is no guarantee that everyone in the area will necessarily identify with it - obvious Scottish examples are bagpipe and fiddle music, with which some associate feelings of pride and nostalgia, and others acute discomfort. In many ways the church faces the same dilemmas as the schools over a declining interest in classical music (and possibly music in general)[52] and so far has certainly tended to respond in the same way: - musical failures and shortcomings are the result of poor material and/or poor leadership.

The possibly unwelcome fact to its providers is that music - church or secular - is not, nor probably has ever been, a matter of overwhelming importance to the majority of Scottish people. It is the present writer's belief in fact that little has really changed in Scottish attitudes - not to say employment prospects for local musicians[53] - since the late 19th century. Scottishness in the arts might be slightly more valued now, but it is highly probable that the only attributes of music still universally appreciated north of the border are such traditional manifestations of excellence as careful preparation and assured performance.

It is to be hoped that the Scottish Church will not make the mistake of seeing the present unwillingness of musicians to commit themselves to regular church work as an "exciting opportunity" to explore new strategies. Excellence comes at a price in any activity. Future Scottish church music may very well become simpler and focussed on *WGWG* ideals but, as Bell himself has demonstrated in his *Big Sings* and elsewhere, "getting things right" is essential to any musical enterprise. It goes without saying that "getting things right" is more often than not the perogative of the talented and well-trained.

> ... the purposeful music teacher will find it necessary to thrash out his own answers to ... questions on the value of music as an educational force.

B. Rainbow, 'The Historical and Philosophical Background of School Music Teaching'

Handbook for Music Teachers, p13.

Nearly forty years later, things do not appear to have changed:

> ... teachers must continually remind themselves why they engage in and teach music at all and be prepared to justify its place in schools.

C. Davies, *Op. Cit., Creative Chords*, p 215.

[52] Video games are blamed in some circles for the declining sales of pop music CDs.

[53] It would be instructive to calculate the number of Scottish musicians in the Scottish University Music Departments for example.

Hopefully Scottish church music will have a viable and even exciting future; it should in any case be sustained and encouraged by the knowledge and pride that any vitality the country's music as a whole now enjoys is largely due to its musical clergy, precentors and organists who through much of the 19th and 20th centuries encouraged the Scots to believe that musical excellence was a matter of some consequence both within and outside the church.

Appendix

Chapter 1

William Dyce

Bernarr Rainbow concedes that William Dyce's *Order of Daily Service with Plain Tune* 'awakened the Anglican Church to its own peculiar heritage' but considers 'the costliness of Dyce's sumptuous work ... prevented [it] from gaining wide acceptance'[1]. The book itself may have been very expensive, but its contents were seemingly well known. Indeed the editor of the *Parish Choir* felt obliged to acknowledge Dyce's pioneer scholarly work after one lengthy article on singing Gregorian chants *Are the Gregorian tones "new and strange to Protestant ears"* had appeared without any reference to him:

> We are reminded that much of what we had to say on this head, in our last number, has been said before us by Mr Dyce in the preface to his edition of the Prayer Book. We remember to have read Mr. Dyce's preface some time ago, but so hastily that it escaped our memory at the time of writing; otherwise we should, in justice to the author, have referred to it. Our own views on the subject, we need hardly say, were formed long previous to the appearance of the book in question; but as our cause must needs gain strength by the addition of so valuable a testimony, we gladly quote the passages referred to.[2]

The *Parish Choir* was sent 'to every part of the world where there is a Bishop of our Church, and is largely distributed where there is any chance of its doing good'[3].

The most extended work on Dyce is Marcia Pointon's *William Dyce 1806-1864: A Critical Biography*. The book is unreliable on religious and musical matters and contains errors like the elevation of Aberdeen's civic leader to the style "Provost of West Cathedral, Aberdeen" [4] and the following fanciful, and very confused, passage:

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[1] B. Rainbow, 'Thomas Helmore and the Anglican Plainsong Revival', *Musical Times*, October 1959, p548.
[2] R. Druitt, *The Parish Choir or Church Music Book*, April 1847, p129.
[3] *Ibid.*, p131.
[4] Later it becomes apparent that the Provost of West Cathedral is the Lord Provost of Aberdeen at the West Parish Church.

> As the decade of the forties slipped by, the two Scotsmen cemented their friendship during Monday evenings spent endeavouring to recapture within the sober confines of All Souls and Trinity National Schools, Langham Place, the immortal beauty of Palestrina and Monteverdi.[5]

All Souls Langham Place was evangelical, Trinity National Schools is presumably a conflation of Trinity College Glenalmond and the School of Design, London and one would also suspect that Monteverdi would have been regarded by William Dyce with even more distaste than Purcell!

Not that sorting out the details of Dyce's career is at all easy, but some consideration of Dyce's life and religious concerns is relevant to any study of his musical activities.

At this distance in time it is probably impossible to form any accurate idea of William Dyce's religious beliefs or affiliations. Even if we had a reliable record of the congregations to which he belonged, there is still no guarantee that Dyce would have completely shared their general outlooks or sympathies. His pamphlets on church ceremonial suggest he was high church in orientation but not necessarily a sympathiser with such things as confession and the sort of advanced ritual which was to come later in the 19th century. Of the two churches which Dyce is known to have attended, All Saints' Margaret Street and St Leonard's Streatham, the latter, at least, was non-Tractarian and the former may have attracted Dyce just through its commitment to religious art (he painted the Reredos) and plainsong.

William Dyce was born into an intellectual and comfortably-off family. His father, Dr William, the eldest son of Alexander Dyce, a merchant, was a medical practioner and later a lecturer at Marischal College. His son's interest in electricity[6] might well have been excited by Dr Dyce's electrical treatments which were advertised in the *Aberdeen Journal* of January 27th 1794 'to be administered either in the patient's home or at his residence in Broad Street'.

Dyce's mother was a daughter of J C Chalmers, a very prosperous businessman (judging by the splendid family residence at Westburn)[7] whose name appears as

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[5] *Op. Cit.*, p 70.

[6] William Dyce won the Blackwell Prize in 1830. 'On the Relations between the Phenomena of Electricity and Magnetism and the consequences deducible from those Relations'.

[7] Dyce painted Westburn House in 1827. The house appears to be the one attributed to Archibald Simpson 1839 in W. A. Brogen *Aberdeen an Illustrated Guide*!

printer of the *Aberdeen Journal.* [8] J. C. Chalmers is mentioned in Lockhart's Life of Burns and seems to have been a talented musician. His father was the Chalmers of the Chalmers' Collection.

When William was born the Dyces lived at 48 Marischal Street, Aberdeen. Despite his father's Episcopal roots (Dr Dyce had been baptised in St Paul's Episcopal Church[9]), the family may well have been members of the Established Church, either St Nicholas or Trinity Chapel-of-Ease[10] in the Shiprow (close to Marischal Street), which had been founded in 1793 as the result of the unhappiness many parishioners felt at the appointment by the Town Council of the Rev George Gordon to the East Parish Church.[11] The Town Council acceded to the request of the dissentient parishioners to allow the commissioning of Trinity Chapel-of-Ease, not least because there was a need for new churches[12] and because there appears to have been an element of *fait accompli* - Trinity was in existence or, at least, in the building when the new congregation was authorised.[13] James Chalmers, a man-of-affairs and 'a Whig in a society which had strong Episcopalian and Jacobite leanings',[14] was a leading member of the West Parish - according to Love he was Precentor from 1774 to 1797[15] - and a manager of the Gaelic Church which worshipped in the undercroft of the East Parish.[16] He might well have wished an undertaking about his daughter's continued Church of Scotland membership before her marriage in 1798, and it may be that, as a compromise between the Established and Episcopal churches, the newly married Dyces opted for the new, slightly radical,[17] Trinity Chapel. In 1835 Isabelle Dyce (William Dyce's sister) and Robert Dundas Cay were married by the Revd. John Murray who had been successively Minister of Trinity Chapel 1816,

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[8] J. C. Chalmers became editor and printer of the *Aberdeen Journal* in 1766 at the age of 22, in succession to his father, holding the post for 44 years. He was also University and City Printer.
[9] Spalding Club, *Records of St Paul's Episcopal Church* .
[10] A concert to raise money for an organ in Trinity Chapel, which was advertised in the *Aberdeen Journal* of 14 06 1788, refers to an Episcopal Chapel of Ease set up by the Revd. G. Farquhar not to a Church of Scotland establishment as appears to be thought by J. Carter and J. Pittock in *Aberdeen and the Enlightenment,* (1986). [information provided by Dr David Bertie.]
[11] A. Gammie, *The Churches of Aberdeen, historical and descriptive,* p 73.
[12] The *Aberdeen Presbytery Minutes* of 25 08 1793 note 10,000 Church of Scotland 'examinates in Aberdeen'.
[13] The *Aberdeen Presbytery Minutes* also record the request that the 'place of worship which we are just building [be] admitted as a Chapel-of-Ease'.
[14] J. Carter and J. Pittock, *Op. Cit.,* p304.
[15] J. Love, *Op.Cit.* p 391.
[16] A. Gammie, *Op.Cit.,* pp 79, 187,188
[17] At the Disruption so many left Trinity that it was abandoned. *Ibid.,* p73.

East Parish 1824 and North Parish 1828, which strongly suggests that a Church of Scotland connection for the Dyce family had been maintained.[18].

However Dr Dyce[19] had died earlier that year in Cuttlehill - one supposes this residence or estate was on the borders of Aberdeen[20] - which further complicates matters. For example, Mrs Dyce upon her husband's death may have promptly returned to the Presbyterian fold after years in the Episcopal Church.

William Dyce's 'early cultivation of that large school of Scotch Theology with which are associated such names as Forbes, Rattray, Skinner, Jolly and Low'[21] - all Episcopal divines and conservative high churchmen - is of some significance. Did he acquire his high church sympathies, at University (though the divinity teaching there in the early 1800's 'imparted nothing at all of theology or of the Bible,'[22]), in Edinburgh or did he as a child attend St Paul's Episcopal Church, Aberdeen? It would have been pleasing to confirm some Dyce connection with St Paul's, not least because one of the duties of the organist there was to teach suitable boys the organ;[23] unhappily the St Paul records for the early 19th-century are missing. William Dyce's artist son, Stirling, claims that Dyce taught himself the organ when he was twelve years old, which seems to dismiss that possibility; particularly when one can conjecture that the instrument upon which he developed his admired improvisation skills was not in a church but in Marishal College, which had acquired the Aberdeen Music Society's organ. This single keyboard, 4 stop instrument, by Snetzler would have been blown by the player through the agency of an iron foot pedal, so Dyce could have operated the instrument without the assistance of an organ blower. There were probably not more than four organs in Aberdeen in 1818, one in a private house (this instrument might well have been in Peterhead)[24], two in the episcopal churches and that situated in Marischal College[25] a further pointer to this latter instrument.

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[18] Marriage Report in the *Scotsman*, October 1835.
[19] As reported in the *Aberdeen Journal*. M. Pointon *Op. Cit.*, p 31, claims that Dr Dyce died in 1836.
[20] The Spalding Club's *Places in Western Aberdeenshire* identify two Cuttlehills - both miles away from Aberdeen.
[21] 'William Dyce Obituary' *The Ecclesiologist*, No. 25, p92
[22] Revd. Donald Sage (student 1804-1814) quoted in J, Carter and C. McLaren,*Crown and Gown* , p76.
[23] University of Aberdeen Special Collections, *Episcopal Church Records.*
[24] Spalding Club, *Day Book of James Beattie.*
[25] *An interim List of Scottish Organs*, p6.

When Dyce became a successful portrait painter in Edinburgh it is very likely that he attended St John's Episcopal Church in Princes Street. His Edinburgh homes were all within a reasonable distance of the church (8 India Street, 128 George Street and 43 Moray Place).[26] Isabelle Dyce's husband, Robert Dundas Cay,[27] was a member of the congregation, and it is reasonable to assume that she may have met Cay through her brother's connections with the church. Were this not the case, everything about St John's would have been appealing to a young man concerned about and anxious to make an impact upon religious art. The church building itself was new and William Burn's early Gothic revival architecture reflected contemporary trends in church design. When, in the late 1820s and early 1830s, Dyce first came to Edinburgh, the music at St John's, under Mr Rogers (organist 1828-1833), was giving great satisfaction surely another attraction for a churchman of Dyce's disposition.

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[26] Royal Scottish Academy Records

[27] Cay was later to become for a time Assistant Secretary to the Committee for the foundation of Trinity College, Glenalmond to which Dyce was a contributor and "consultant" on architectural matters.

Chapter 2

The pre-Reformation organ in King's College, Aberdeen.

Following Stephen Bicknell[28]. John Harper finds 'from the archival and physical information it is possible to propose (albeit tentatively) that the organ on the pulpitum in King's College would have one keyboard, a chromatic compass of forty-six notes, between five and seven stops, and pipes no longer than five feet in length'.[29] One would have suspected that an organ of this size would have attracted at least the same notoriety as the organ in St Nicholas Church, Aberdeen, and that the organist would also have been known. The cost of an instrument of the size and complexity Harper postulates (in English money between £30 and £50 excluding transport costs) would surely have been noted somewhere in the records not to mention in the inventory.

Dr Ritchie at St Andrew's Glasgow

> Such being the principles and sentiments, which I have long entertained with regard to Instrumental Music, I feel myself fully warranted to concur with my people, in their scheme of erecting an organ in St Andrew's Church. With this view application was by Autumn 1806, made to the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Council *not for leave to erect* an organ in the Church. It became us not to present a request, which the Civil Power has not the right to grant. All matters of Worship belong exclusively to the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction. The request was that the Lord Provost and Magistrates and Council as our Heritors would allow certain alterations in certain seats, that there might be room for setting up an organ. The petitioners at the same time binding themselves to defray the expense, and to make good all damaged that might be *supposed*, but which they *apprehended* not to arise from the introduction of an organ. The petitioners submitted, as became them, to the Civil Power and never presumed to think of touching the seats in question. In this situation the business lay, until the beginning of June last, it was resolved, by the Minister and a few Heads of Families to have a meeting one evening in the week of such members of the Congregation as might find it convenient to attend in Church, for the purpose of improving themselves in Sacred Music. This practice, I believe, existed in other churches of this city, and the idea was borrowed from our neighbours. After finding that this proposal was relished

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[28] S. Bicknell, *The History of the English organ*, p40.
[29] J. Harper, 'Music and Ceremonial, c 1500-1560', J. Geddes, *Op.Cit.*, p32.

by a number of the heads, and that they gave regular attendance, it was next proposed by some attendants to introduce a Chamber Organ as a help to the Precentor, for guiding the voices of the singers. For such an introduction, it never once occurred to me, that leave should be obtained from either the Civil or Ecclesiastical Powers. This was a matter of merely private accommodation. We did not meddle with the seats: we made no alteration whatever, in any part of the church. The organ was introduced, was employed regularly one evening in the week, and the use of it never did, as far as I know, excite even the appearance of a tendency to disturbance.[30]

The St Andrews Music Book

The origins of W1:

Recent research has suggested that W1 may have been copied in St Andrews in the 1240s. Very little attempt has been made to understand why or how virtuoso polyphony associated with the cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris came to be cultivated so far from home. The article argues for a redating of the manuscript in the 1230s and therefore rejects the suggestion that the interest in polyphony was generated by Bishop David Bernham (in office from 1239-1253) and points to his predecessor, Guillaume Mauvoisin (1203-1238) as the agency by which Parisian music was transferred from Paris to St. Andrews.[31]

Hugh S. Roberton: *The Beatitudes*

And so we come to the end of our examination of the merits of a prentious piece of flapdoodle.

What are our conclusions?

First that if Sir Hugh is trying to bluff us by writing this work with his tongue in his cheek, he has failed, for the same reasons that the cry of "Wolf, wolf!" went unheeded

Second that the large quantity of paper and ink used in the production of the work in war-time could have been put to many better uses.

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[30] Presbytery of Glasgow, *Op. Cit.*
[31] M. Everist, 'From Paris to St Andrews: The Origins of W1', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 1990, p41.

> Third, that Sir Hugh's sloppy attitude to Christianity is very unpleasant.
>
> Fourth, that while we can continue to laugh quietly at many a Victorian "sacred" choral work, Sir Hugh has made himself appear a clown before the musicians of the world (as I know from contacts even before making a study of "The Beatitudes.")
>
> Fifthly, that (presumably knowing that César Franck had already written a "Work" entitled "The Beatitudes") Sir Hugh had a great deal of impertinence to set the words at all.
>
> Lastly, that after this experiences, I will continue to enjoy the music of Josquin, Tallis, Lasso. Schütz, Purcell, Cherubini, Schubert, Liszt, Delius, Honegger and Willie Walton (beside all those mentioned earlier) even if they come into the contemptible category of "Works".[32]

However one may regret the tone of these comments, Roberton did leave himself open to criticism for his 'expressed contempt for what he calls "Works"...'[33] and by committing such a poor quality piece to print.. It has to be said that more temperate commentators were also appalled by the work:

> Herewith the thing for which I can find no description. I read the score, and assumed a condition of high dudgeon as I thought of the stuff I have written myself, and have assigned to the W.P.B. as unworthy of submitting to a publisher. Further, I cannot for the life of me contemplate what old Diack was doing to publish it.... While there was never any doubt in my mind about his attempts at composition, this, believe me, has shaken me to the very foundations of myself.[34]

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[32] Christian Fletcher [Cedric Thorpe Davie], *The Beatitudes by Hugh S Roberton a study in destructive musical criticism.* A privately mimeographed monograph of apparently at least 151 copies dated 18:5:42, p11.
[33] *Ibid.,* p1.
[34] Alec Redshaw, *Letter* to Thorpe Davie 04 10 1955 (sic).

Chapter 3

Principal Donaldson and St Salvator's Chapel

Reading Donaldson's arguments it is easy to forget the chequered history of the "University Chapel" - so described (despite his protestations) in the souvenir programme for the Opening Services on Sunday 16th October 1904. At the Reformation students and staff had decamped to Holy Trinity, and St Salvator's was left to be used, among other things, as a Commissiary Court Room. In 1761 it was decided to abandon St Leonard's and make St Salvator's a Parish Church providing it with a loft for university staff and students. Attendance was obligatory until the Disruption of 1843, when staff and students were allowed to attend the churches of their choice.

Forbes' restoration in 1861, 'represented a very zealous and and praiseworthy attempt to recreate the church in its original image'.[35] By taking this lead Forbes signalled that St Salvator's was University property, a message he later (1879) reinforced by using a legacy to erect those stalls for the Principal and Professors which later Donaldson was so grudgingly to accept. Needless to say such a move was resisted by the non-University heritors who took the view that the "College Church" was as much their property as the University's. They raised and lost a jurisdiction case in the Court of Session in 1865 and squatters, as well as legal rights, having been established by the university a new church for the congregation, St Leonard's, was built (partially at university expense) in Hepburn Gardens - but not until the new century!

University of St Andrews,
Lecturer in Music

University Court Minutes 1924-25 p102

> 1 Mr Sawyer to arrange a course of Lectures in Music in its various aspects during the session, the details to be arranged after consultation with the Principal.

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[35] R. G. Cant, *The College of St Salvator,* p220.

2 Mr Sawyer to be responsible for the Music in the College Chapel, to play the organ, and to train the choir.

Mr Sawyer to give instruction to the students in St Mary's College in Voice Production and Church Music.

4 If requested by the students, Mr Sawyer to conduct the University Music Society.

5 Mr Sawyer to take such further steps as may be approved, by means of concerts and recitals to further the cause of music in the University.

6 Mr Sawyer's duties to commence on Ist October 1925 with the assurance that steps will be taken to raise the post to the full status of Lecturer in Music.

7 The salary to commence at £300 to be increased at the option of the University Court.[36]

This agreeable job specification was later modified to include warnings that no other work must be undertaken without permission, and to omit any references to teaching in St Mary's.

[36] *St Andrews University Court Minutes*, 1924-25, p102.

Chapter 4

Loretto School Chapel Music

Writing to F H Cliffe, the organist, the Head [Almond] expressed his views very plainly:

> "For boys at least I think that music, especially sacred music, should be of a broad, robust, and diatonic kind. I do not like modern music, and utterly object to anything of a sentimental nature."

Though the music was of the strong and virile order, a high standard of taste was maintained. The excellence of the singing, of course, varied. At times it was quite good, at times it was less good; but visitors who did not know what they were to expect were invariably surprised. There were two anthems every Sunday, besides psalms and canticles. At first one anthem was always repeated the following Sunday, but from Mr Cliffe's time, beginning about 1889, anthems were rarely repeated more than once in the year, unless, indeed, it were some special favourite. Thus a boy who had been regularly in the choir for four or five years had worked through a great deal of music. An editorial in *Musical Opinion* of April 1903, remarks: "It may be questioned whether any school in the country (public or private) equalled Loretto in the attention paid to music, with special reference, of course, to the voice. It was not only that music was taught regularly as a part of the school course, but it was an important factor in the life of the boys. Some statistics with respect to the anthems, services and larger works in the repertoire of the school were perfectly surprising, and beyond anything that I have ever heard at any other school." At the same time it must be borne in mind that all the singing energies of the school were devoted to the chapel services. With the exception of impromptu musical evenings, there was practically no secular singing at all.[37]

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[37] H. B. Tristram, *Op. Cit.*, p138.

Chapter 5

David Hamilton

David Hamilton's reputation rests today on his achievements as an organ builder and as the putative inventor of pneumatic assistance on organ actions - 'a new principle in mechanism, which he applied for relieving the touch of large instruments' - a device he had 'added to the organ in St John's Episcopal Church, Edinburgh in 1835'. Thistlethwaite followed up Hamilton's claims that 'a paper was read at a meeting of the British Association at Birmingham in 1839, explanatory of a model of it which he then exhibited', but, could find no references to such a lecture in the official record.[38]

Perhaps, then as now, peripheral and possibly informal demonstrations were not adjudged worthy of inclusion in the "main programme". Hamilton's pneumatic lever apparently was only ever used in St John's, though W L Sumner says that the firm's records note the use of [an improved?] version in the organ built for Augustine Congregational Church, Edinburgh in 1861[39]. In 1852 Hamilton built an organ for the Reid School music room of 'unusual complexity' which was 'essentially didactic' in purpose, having four keyboards to illustrate 'the elementary parts of [Professor Donaldson's] lectures'.[40]

Hamilton had studied organ building in Germany and first appeared in the Edinburgh directories in 1822-3 as a pianoforte maker and by 1825-6 as pianoforte and organ builder. In 1838-9 his business had been renamed 'Hamilton and Müller, organ builders. Müller was organist of St Paul's Episcopal Chapel, Edinburgh, and seems to have been an able executant on the violin and organ and to have enjoyed a high reputation[41] in Edinburgh After Müller's death Hamilton was to go into partnership with his brother Adam.

Thistlethwaite describes Hamilton as an 'unusual figure who deserves closer study' and whose 'claims to have introduced German and other continental features into British organ design ... ought to be investigated.'[42]

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[38] N. Thistlethwaite, *Op. Cit.*, p352.
[39] W. L. Sumner, *The Organ, its Evolution, Principles of Construction and Use* , p338.
[40] C. D. S. Field *Op.Cit.*, p8.
[41] According to D. Baptie in *Musical Scotland* , Müller was a composer of hymn tunes (Noonday Hymn) and *The Vocal Gems of Scotland* (1837-9).
[42] N. Thistlethwaite, *Op. Cit.*, p530.

North Leith Church

Minutes of 8th October 1879

"Presbytery Version" of Objection to Installation of Organ in North Leith

> We the subscribing members of the North Leith Parish Church petition you regarding a contemplated innovation in the public worship of God in the said church; in so far that it is proposed to erect an organ therein and to make use of instrumental music which is contrary to the laws of the Church of Scotland; and that we most strongly object thereto, and crave that you will institute such enquiry as you think proper concerning the contemplated innovation in worship and we hope that you will give effect to the prayer of our petition, and interpose your authority to prevent the said introduction of an organ.[43]

Letter from Charles Stuart Hamilton:

> 116 George Street
> 2nd February 1881
>
> 1 I beg to state that no sooner had I received the appointment of organist than I heard that Mr Stewart, your minister, had stated to more than one of his congregation that he was very far from being impressed by my manner - and this before he had more than two opportunities of meeting me personally and both these meetings of short duration.
>
> 2 A few days before the organ was opened by Dr Peace I received a note from Mr Stewart asking me to call at the Manse and on doing so Mr Stewart asked me if I would have any objection to allowing Mr Senior to play on the first Sunday as he was afraid that the choir would be nervous, and as there were three services he was anxious everything should go well and therefore he thought by Mr Senior playing and I conducting the choir singing would go steadier. To this I consented, but shortly afterwards I learned that Mr Stewart had reversed the case and that I was nervous. This I deny and had I not thought I was conferring a favour to Mr Stewart I would never have for a moment allowed a stranger to usurp my position. On learning these facts I need hardly state that it caused me great annoyance.

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[43] *North Leith Minutes*, 08 10 1879.

3 The proposal which I am informed was made by Mr Stewart to two of his elders to pay me my quarter's salary in advance before playing or entering on my Sunday duties, and giving his reason that a great mistake had been committed in the selection of an organist.

4 Mr Stewart sending for me after the evening service on last Sacremental Sunday and telling me that he saw several of the congregation laughing at my playing.

5 The reports current in Leith as regards my inability as an organist I am told emanated from the Manse, they are naturally very painful to me.

6 The letter from Mr Phipps which you already have before you. This letter speaks for itself, and I pass it by with the simple remark that I may safely leave the session to characterise it as they may feel it deserves, but before leaving this subject I may state that previous to receiving Mr Phipps' letter his manner to me was all that could be desired and I am now sorry it should be otherwise.

I need not mention that a discussion of this kind has given me great pain and anxiety. Had I received notice through the Kirk Session that my playing was not giving satisfaction no discussion of this kind would have arisen but the matter would have ended either by my resignation or an endeavour to remedy the faults if there had been any but I understand when the committee heard me playing in St Paul's they were satisfied and have been so since. Although not connected with my resignation, I beg to state that having heard Mr Stewart at the last meeting of Session complained of my not going to the vestry with [to get?] the tunes, I beg to state that once only I asked Mr Parne to get me the tunes at an evening service as the opening voluntary was a little behind and up to Sunday 16th January I always went myself to the vestry for the tunes. Mr Stewart's manner to me all along has been so distant that it has led me to believe that he wished and I would now consider it a great favour if the session would release me at once from my engagement as since receiving Mr Phipps' letter and reading the letters in the Leith Herald I have been quite upset and unfit for my duties so that I had to leave the Church on Sunday through giddiness and I find it is having a serious effect on my health.

If any of the above statements should be called into question I am prepared to produce proof in support of them and having submitted these matters for the consideration of the Session I have respectfully to request of them that they should now do justice to my character both professional and otherwise.

I need not state how sorry I am that I am unable to fulfill my engagement with Session but since the receipt of Mr Phipp s' letter I have not confidence to play further in your church, I might again have to leave the service any day unfinished. Would you kindly make what an arrangement you deem proper to fill my place.

Charles Stuart Hamilton[44]

Minutes 2nd December 1914

A report by the Psalmody Committee to the Kirk Session was read by Mr W A Davidson

Mr Moderator and Gentlemen

At the last Session Meeting the question of the lack of tenor voices in the choir and the absence of Mr J L Wright therefrom were raised and you were assured that the Psalmody Committee had the whole question of the musical services of the church under earnest consideration and that a report should be submitted to this meeting. In fulfilment of that assurance your Committee desire to bring to your notice the following facts and circumstances that have arisen. On 9th June, 1914 the Psalmody Committee met Mr Pettie for the express purpose of considering the improvement of the musical part of the church services. The meeting took the form of an informal conversation and these important points were the ones chiefly considered.

1 How might the membership of the choir be increased.

2 Was not Mr Pettie's standards of qualification for such membership unduly high.

3 Did not his manner exercise a discouraging influence on intending recruits?

4 The irregularity of his playing of the organ was called into question.

5 Why was it he did not regularly play at the opening of the Sunday School as laid down in the terms of contract.

Your Committee brought this point to Mr Pettie's notice at that conference and he promised to see to it that he should attend regularly from the beginning of the winter

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[44] *Ibid.*, February 1881.

session. In explanation he stated there was a choir practice after morning service, but the committee referred him to a former decision of the Psalmody Committee which vetoed this practice. He has not fulfillled his promise and has broken the terms of his contract.

The Sunday School has met regularly since the first Sunday of October and he has opened one. As to point 4 - his playing on the organ - your Committee beg to say that there was an appreciable difference for some weeks following June 9th, but they regret to say that in their opinion this improved standard has not been long maintained.

The third point - his manner towards intending members - was also conversed on freely. Several instances were cited by individual members of your Committee where Mr Pettie's manner had exercised a discouraging influence on intending recruits and he admitted that perhaps his manner was a little brusque which might be attributable to his highly-strung musical temperament. The next point - his standard of qualification for membership - was brought to Mr Pettie's notice and your Committee, while fully appreciating his position as a musical expert, were of the opinion that undue prominence should not be given to quality of tone in a voice but that other considerations should weigh on the choosing of voices. With regard to the last point, it was also agreed at that interview that Mr Pettie and the choir members should look around and endeavour to obtain some tenor recruits for the choir. On 16th October the choir reported that they had been unsuccessful and expressed the hope that the Committee would recognise the serious want and take their own means of seeing it supplied.

On 14th November this question was raised in the Session along with the question of Mr J L Wright's absence. It was stated he had been dismissed. For the Committtee's information the choirmaster was asked to furnish a full statement of the circumstances in which Mr Wright left the choir. He stated in reply that Mr Wright had joined the voluntary choir of St Mary's Cathedral which required his attendance on Sunday and Thursday evenings. That reply was deemed unsatisfactory and a further communication was addressed to Mr Pettie who replied "Mr Wright's position is simply this; that he is only an ex-member and not a member. His duties at St Mary's Cathedral conflict with what we require". In view of Mr Pettie's evasion of the point at issue, it was considered advisable to obtain Mr Wright's statement, which says that when he became a member of Mr Collinson's voluntary choir in February 1914 he informed Mr Pettie <u>then</u> he should be unable to attend practice on Thursday evening but could attend church on Sunday morning if allowed to do so. No definite reply was vouchsafed by Mr Pettie when Mr Wright was informed that he must either attend

practice or vacate his seat in the choir. As Mr Pettie was fully aware of the circumstances in which Mr Wright was placed this intimation was tantamount to dismissal. In the absence of a full explanation from Mr Pettie, in spite of two opportunities afforded him, the committee are of the opinion in this matter, in the present circumstances of the choir, he acted with indiscretion and injustice.

Indiscretion, because being left with one tenor in his choir - Mr Gosman not being available - he has dismissed that one voice; injustice, because his dismissal should have been conveyed to Mr Wright in February and not delayed till October. After a long deliberation on the above report, and on the whole question of the musical services of the church the following motions were made

(1) Mr Gregor F Robertson, seconded by Mr Hunter, moved that the Psalmody Committee's report be sent to Mr Pettie for his remarks on same, these to be sent to the Kirk Session within 14 days.

(2) Mr Trotter, seconded by Mr Reed, moved the previous question.

(3) Mr A S Clark seconded by Mr Paterson moved that Mr Pettie be asked to resign his office of Organist and Choirmaster and thereafter the Session consider the amount of an honorarium to be given to him.

On a vote being taken the result was as follows

for Mr Clark's motion: 14
for Mr Gregor Robertson: 4
and for the previous question, moved by Mr Trotter: 2

Mr Clark's motion was accordingly declared carried and a committee was appointed, consisting of the Moderator and Messrs. Thos Robertson, Hunter and Trotter and the Session Clerk to draft a letter to be sent to Mr Pettie asking for his resignation by 31st December 1914, his duties to cease on 31st March 1915

Mr Jacob seconded by Mr Trotter moved that £60 equal to one years's salary be granted to Mr Pettie as an honorarium.

Mr Swanson, seconded by Mr Chalmers, moved that the the amount be £30 equal to one half year's salary.

On a vote Mr Swanson's motion was passed by 11 to 6

The Kirk Session agreed that the half year's salary will be given to Mr Pettie on condition that his resignation is in the hands of the Session Clark by 31st December 1914.

St Mary's Dalkeith

1841

Edinburgh Dalkeith. A petition has been addressed to the Duke of Buccleugh, etc, etc, relative to an Episcopal Chapel in Dalkeith, to the following purport, and it sets forth that-

"We, the undersigned inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood of the Episcopal Catholic Church, have for a long time lamented that (unless at considerable inconvenience) we enjoy no opportunity of worshipping God according to that form of ritual to which we are sincerely attacked (attached). In order to remove this disadvantage, we therefore most respectfully appeal to you, soliciting your sanction and assistance in the building of an Episcopal chapel and the establishment of an Episcopal congregation in the town or vicinty of Dalkeith; and we beg to enclose a copy of resolution passsed at a meeting of Episcopalians in reference to this subject. That you would be pleased to take this matter into your serious consideration, that you would confer on the subject, and render your co-operation and assistance in whatever way more appeal to you the most desirable and effectual, is the humble prayer of, my lords and gentlemen, your most obedient humble servants".
(signed by 106 Episcopalians)[45]

Memorial of the Lay Clerks of St Mary's Chapel Dalkeith 1854 for an increase in salary

We the lay clerks of your grace's chapel venture to approach your grace humbly soliciting an advance in salary; being induced to do so by the increased price of provisions which united with the extravagant charge for lodgings in Dalkeith presses heavily upon our stipends at this time.

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[45] *Scottish Chronicle Volume 2* . 1906

We most respectfully inform your Grace that a similar appeal has been made by many of the Cathedral Choirs in England and that in many instances the respective chapters have acceded to its prayers and as your grace is aware that our position here excludes us from many advantages possessed by English choirs in the form of professional and other engagements during their spare hours, we are more emboldened to hope that your grace will take this our memorial into your favourable consideration.

John Holmyard
Henry James Jones
J [unclear] Tolley

Lasswade/Dalkeith Advertiser August 5th 1999

I was a member of St Mary's Church Choir in the early 1920s when we, as choirboys, were paid two shillings per quarter for singing at matins and evensong then choir practices on Friday nights from 7pm to 8pm.

There was a film in The Pavilion called the White Sister starring Lillian Gish and we were asked to sing two verses of the hymn Rock of Ages at a certain part of the film. We sang at two performances for five nights and three on the Saturday for which we received two shillings and a free pass for the Pavilion on the following Tuesday.

I do not remember what I spent the two bob on, but I do know we were very proud.

Happy memories indeed,

Andrew Milne
Midfield Cottage

St David's Weem

The Auld Kirk was handed over by the heritors of Weem Parish in 1839 to the then Sir Neil Menzies for a family mausoleum. He in return gave a site for a new Parish Church which was in use until 7th July 1921. As this building was then requiring extensive repairs and alterations, 'it [was] considered expedient to arrange, if possible, that St David's Church should be substituted for and become the Parish Church. This had been approved by Presbytery in 1917 ... In 1925, St David's was the Parish Church and as such it was transferred to the General Trustees in 1928.'[46] The redundant Parish Church then became the Menzies Clan Society Hall and is now a private dwelling.

46 *Internal Memo,* from Secretary, General Trustees to Principal Clerk The Church of Scotland 15 12 2000.

Chapter 6

Andrew Carnegie

Although the following quotations refer to non-UK installations the procedures and paperwork in Scotland appear to have been identical. Unfortunately Columbia University, the repository for Carnegie documents, does not have any Scottish records with the exception of those for the New Jerusalem Church, Edinburgh which are also given below.

Memorial Presbyterian Church — March 28th 1908
Youngtown Ohio

Dear Mr Butler

Yours of March 18th received. The position that Mr Carnegie always takes is that if a more expensive organ than that which Mr Carnegie considers the one for the church, according to our standards, that his contribution remains the same and is available when the whole of the purchase price is raised and only his contribution is required to complete payment.

The following has a distasteful ring today but was probably considered good sense at the time, particularly as £600 was indeed a very hefty sum for an organ.

Rev James Melville — September 19 1913
St John's Church
Black River B W I

Yours of August 27 received. If, as you state, your congregation consists of poor black people, surely less than £600 might suffice to purchase a suitable instrument.

Carnegie also expected congregations to make sensible decisions about the funding of their instruments:

Brown Town
Jamaica

March 28th 1914

Dear Sirs

Yours of March 10th received. In this schedule you show the church bilding [Carnegie was an enthusiast for phonetic spelling] as having cost £2,200 and the equipment £800. You refer to an endowment of £900. Is it not possible to use this for the organ? It would seem more important to complete the equipment of the church in any way necessary for its work, before accumulating an endowment fund.

Churches which were not prepared to raise any money for an organ themselves received a very dusty response:

Mr W Wagner
297 Hudson Avenue
Rochester NJ

11 April 17 1911

Yours received. Mr Carnegie does not care to consider an application for assistance in procuring organs when nothing has been raised locally towards the end in view.

The following is the correspondence between a Scottish Church and Andrew Carnegie:

A Carnegie Esq
Skibo Castle
Dornoch
Sutherlandshire

c/o Calder
42 Warrender Park
Terrace
Edinburgh
Sep 19 1911

On behalf of the New Jerusalem Church (Swedenborgian) of 14A Gayfield Square Edinburgh, I am writing to ascertain if you would be willing to make a grant towards a little organ which we require to complete the fitting of our church.

Our church, but quite a small one, has just been recently built at the total cost of about £370 and has utilised all available funds. We feel however that could we obtain from

you a grant for half the cost of the organ, a kindness you have often granted churches, we may be able to raise the other half by special appeal.

The writer was recently in Manchester and visited Messrs Wagstaffe's warehouses and found there an organ which would exactly suit our requirements. Enclosed is the advertisement of same which is listed at 62 guineas (pipe-top not being desired). Messrs Wagstaffe allow 26% discount for cash down and agree to pay cost of carriage to Edinburgh so the actual cost of the organ would be £46.16.1 (forty eight pounds 16/1)
Trusting you will be kind enough to favour us with a reply at your convenience.

I remain
Yours faithfully
V I Dicks

c/o Calder
16/9/12

I regret that I have not been in a position to return your question form before as same as only come today, having been delayed at the church 14A Gayfield Square. I now enclose the form answered as correctly as possible thinking best for the sake of exactness, to state that the church was built by Messrs Speirs of Glasgow, who gave as a [?] price for same, which included not only the building, but also most of the equipment as well.

Therefore I am unable to give you the exact separate figures of building and equipment as stated on your form. The total cost was £371 10sh.

For your information I would state that we have no resident minister (receiving visits from ministers of our Glasgow society or filling the pulpit with a lay preacher), and the matter of raising funds for the new organ has been placed in my hands, as I am the organist as well as being a member of the committee.

In conclusion I would ask the favour of you, that should you communicate further with me, will you be good enough to address the communication to

a/o Messrs Thomas Monk and Son. 54 Princes Street, Edinburgh in which firm I occupy the position of Banking Cashier.

I remain
Yours truly
V I Dicks

Jas Bartram Esq
Secretary
Carnegie Corporation of New York
8 East 91st Street
New York

New Jerusalem Church
14A Gayfield Square
Edinburgh
12th January 1913

Dear Sir,

I beg to remind you that in September 1912 , I wrote to you for a grant towards a fund which we were raising, in order to procure a new organ.

On Sep 20th 1912, you wrote to me from Skibo Castle, Dornoch, stating the Carnegie Corporation of New York does not care to consider applications for assistance in procuring organs when nothing has been raised locally towards the object in view.

Accordingly we have been making a series of efforts during the last three months to raise funds, and as a result of our united efforts we have managed to raise £25 (twenty five pounds)

Further we have received an offer of exactly the same organ (made by the same firm) from a local Musselburgh agent for £45 (forty five pounds) which is £4' 16/6 less than than the cost if purchased direct. As you will remember I stated when filling in the application form the cost of organ was £49' 16/6

It would give us great pleasure, if you would see your way to kindly grant us the balance of £20 (twenty pounds) now required so that we may obtain this organ, which we very much require to complete our small church.

Should you consider our application favorably [sic] I have only to add (being ignorant of what means you adopt to ensure the grant being used for the purpose stated) that a crossed check [sic] payable to either the New Jerusalem Church, or to Messrs Wagstaffe of Manchester (the organ builders) could be negotiated by us.

I am requesting the Secretary of the Committee to sign this letter in witness of its verity, and trusting to be favoured with a reply.

I remain

yours sincerely for the New Jerusalem Churcgh

V I Dicks
c/o Gordon
71 Elm Row
Edinburgh

P L Pulford (Secretary)
52 Elm Grove
Edinburgh

Carnegie Corporation of New York

c/o Mrs Gordon
Edinburgh
May 21 1913

Dear Sirs

NEW JERUSALEM CHURCH

With further reference to your favour of April 18th, promising to pay the balance of £20 (twenty pounds) on our new organ, when same had been installed and payment became due, we now beg to inform you that the organ has been supplied by

Mr J J Cottam
30 Haroes Loan
Musselburgh
Scotland

and is now installed in our church ready for use.

We have paid Mr Cottam the sum of £25 (twenty five pounds) and informed him the £20 (twenty pounds) balance will be paid in due course by Mr Carnegie.

We shall therefore be glad if you will kindly remit to us, or to Mr Cottam as you think fit - the sum of £20 (twenty pounds) as promised and we enclose herewith memo with questions answered, as requested.

We wish to thank you for your kindness on behalf of the church.
yours truly

for the New Jerusalem Church

V J Dicks

The business-like approach of Mr Dicks must have impressed the Carnegie Corporation because the grant was paid though the cheque did go astray - everyone involved from the Carnegie Corporation to the Edinburgh Postmaster disclaiming responsibility for the errant funds!

Cessation of Grants for Organs in the USA

The following circular letter was presumably sent to all applicants in 1920. The addressee was wondering if Carnegie could help the church acquire another organ - the first, inadequately insured, having been destroyed in a fire. On previous form a request like that to Carnegie's secretary, James Bartram, would have earned a very brief and scathing response!

James L Finlay Esq June 28 1920
Wyndmor Pa

My dear sirs,

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your application for assistance from the Carnegie Corporation of New York in the purchase of a musical instrument for your church. This Corporation has in the past expended a large sum in assisting congregations of all religious bodies throught the United States, Canada and other English Speaking Communities in the purchase of musical instruments for use in churches. The abnormal conditions created by the recent war have brought upon the Corporation new demands of great importance and of pressing urgency. These demands still continue, and it is therefore unlikely that the corporation will in the future be able to devote any part of its resources to the purchase of church musical instruments.

The Trustees of the Corporation feel sure that their action in this matter will be completely understood by the men and women of the churches, and they beg to express on their part the assurances that this action does not involve in any sense a lessened interest in the cause of religion or of religious organisations. In sending this letter they

desire to express their earnest wishes for the continued spiritual progress of the congregations which you represent.

very truly yours

Chapter 7

John MacDonell Nisbet

Nisbet's penchant for meticulous records allows us to gain a picture of his musical tastes and, if the following programme at *Edenholme* [a residence in Stonehaven, now a Retirement Home] was played to the necessary standard, of his considerable technical prowess as pianist and organist.[47] A later recital in Blair's College Chapel that included Vierne's *Third Symphony* in a programme that would have been seriously on the short side if the complete work was not played, suggests that he was in the habit of giving programmes like the one noted below in full.

Friday 7th January at 8pm [1926] Edenholme, Stonehaven

[Organ]	
Sonata in F Minor	Mendelssohn
Pastorelle in A	Jules Grison
La cinquantaine	Gabriel-Marie
Grand Choeur	Hollins
[Piano?]	
Sonata in C#minor Op 27	Beethoven
Arabesque	Schumann
Two Paganini Studies	
Waterwagtail	Cyril Scott
Impromptu	Chopin
Ballade in G Minor	Chopin

The major repertoire items (Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Schumann and Chopin) and the items by Hollins and Cyril Scott, then highly rated contemporary composers, point to a musician of broad sympathies. Imagination and catholicity of taste can also be found in Nisbet's Carol Services at the East Parish Church, Aberdeen.

[47] According to David Murray, Nisbet was considered a very competent musician in Aberdeen musical circles.

Midnight Carol Service 1927

Organ	
Offertoire sur des Noels	E Commette
Fantasia on Christmas Themes	W T Best
Rhapsodie	E Gigout
God rest you merry	Traditional
Come, come to the manger	Traditional
Joseph and the Angel	R R Terry
When Christ was born	J C Bridge
Mater ora filium	
Listen, Lordings unto me	
Jesu, the virgin born	Holst
First Lesson	*Isaiah VII - 10-14*
Bululalow	Roy Thomson
Second Lesson	*St Luke II 1-7*
When I view the mother holding	J Barnby
Third Lesson	*Isaiah LII 7-10*
The Moon shines bright	
Fourth Lesson	*Luke II 1-4*
Bring a torch	Savoly

Chapter 9

Conclusion

After this analysis , with what are we left? We are left with more than collections of music, potential anthems, and a few liturgical innovations. I suggest that we are left with an approach for liturgical renewal that is needed among mainline churches on both sides of the Atlantic. I offer the following as a summary of this renewal movement:

Restore singing to the people.

Allow singing to build and sustain the worshipping community by using as little accompaniment as possible.

Explore the folk song resources of your region and acquaint yourself with them. These contain the essence of your culture.

Explore the songs of the world church. These are the prayers of others, and by singing them we sing in solidarity with all of God's people.

Shape the flow of the liturgy in the manner of your heritage, not only in its recent manifestations. Maule reminds us that "tradition is consonant with adaptive change and extends further than the earliest memories (or prejudices) of the oldest living member". One does not have to reinvent the shape of the liturgy, just breathe new life into old bones.

Be knowledgeable about your spiritual heritage, including hymns. For "if we are not familiar with the great hymns which have shaped Christian life and faith through centuries, we have little by which to judge modern writing".

Look at biblical content in light of contemporary need. Don't settle for conventional responses to existential dilemnas. Give those assembled an opportunity to tell you what they think the Scripture is saying.

Balance prophetic insight with liturgical comfort. The security and comfort of liturgy must be authenticated by an awareness of those who experience insecurity, discomfort and injustice in its many manifestations - political oppression, racial discrimination, economic deprivation, gender exclusion, class struggles, etc.

Preparing liturgy needs to be be a community experience, not a solitary act by the minister or musician at the computer.

Enliven the liturgy with metaphore - symbols, rituals, movement, poetry, drama, song, narrative - minimizing the one-way medium of the sermon and spoken word.

Fnally, be open to the spirit of the wild goose in liturgy which may alight at any time in unexpected and disturbing ways. etc.[48]

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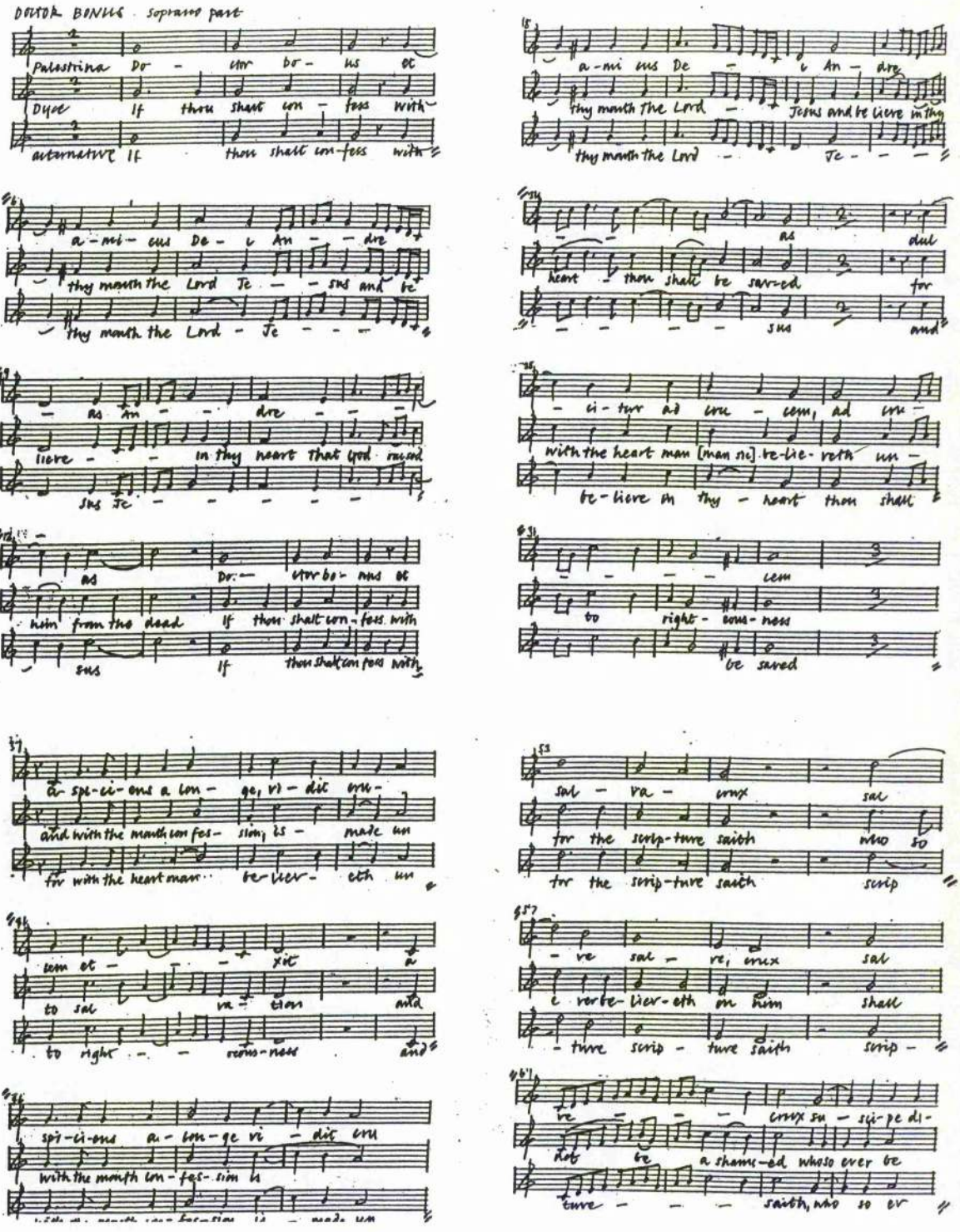
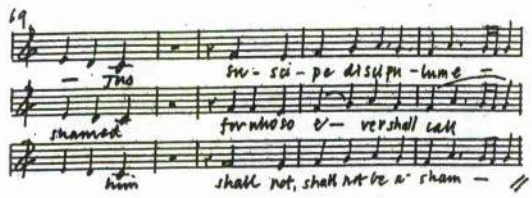
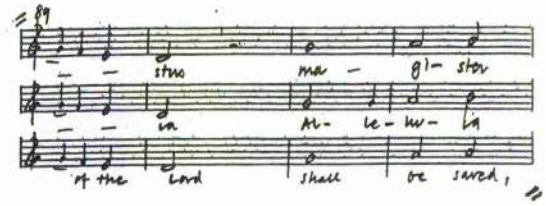
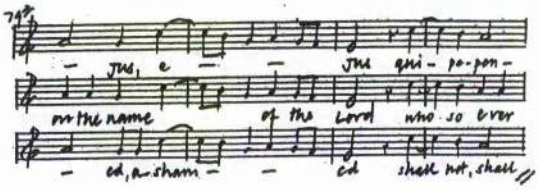
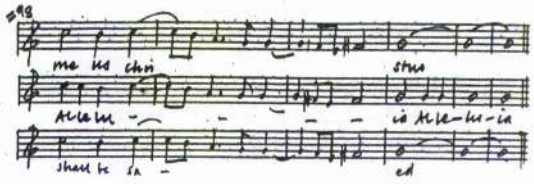
[48]C Michael Hawn, 'John Bell and the Music of the Iona Community', *Op. Cit.*, p221.

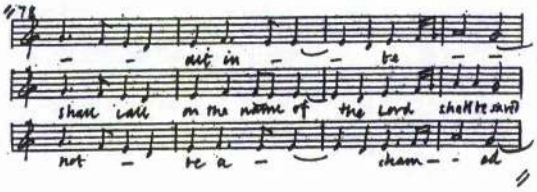

DOUDA BONUS soprano part
Palestrina Do - mi - nus De - us An - dre
Dyce If thou shalt con - fess with
alternative If thou shalt con-fess with
thy mouth the Lord Je - sus and be
thy mouth the Lord - Je - - -
as An - - dre - - -
liere - - in thy heart that God raised
sus Je - - - - -
as Do:- mi - nus de
him from the dead If thou shalt con-fess with
sus If thou shalt con fess with
a- spi-ci-ens a lon- ge, vi - dit eum -
and with the mouth con fes- sion; is - made un
for with the heart man be-lieve- eth un
eum et - - - xit a
to sal va - tion and
to right - - - eous-ness and
spi-ci-ens a- lon-ge vi - dit eum
with the mouth con-fes-sion is
a-mi cus De - - i An - dre
thy mouth the Lord - - Jesus and be liere in thy
thy mouth the Lord - Je - - -
as dul
heart - thou shalt be saved for
sus and
- ci - tur ad eum - cem, ad eum -
with the heart man [man sic] be-lie- veth un -
be-liere in thy - heart thou shalt
cem
to right - eous- ness
be saved
sal - va - eum sal
for the scrip-ture saith who so
for the scrip-ture saith scrip
- ve sal - ve, crux sal
i verbe-lier-eth on him shall
- ture scrip - ture saith scrip -
ve - - - crux su - spi-pe di-
bet be a shame-ed whoso ever be
ture - - - saith, who so ev

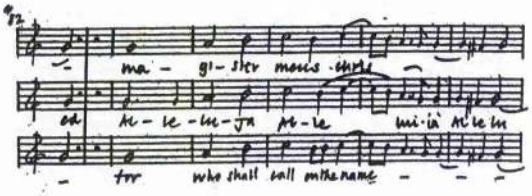

69
The
su - sci - pe disci pu - lum e -
shamed
for who so e - ver shall call
him
shall not, shall not be a - sham -


89
stus
ma - gi - ster
in
Al - le - lu - ia
if the Lord
shall
be saved,


74
jus, e - jus qui - po - pon -
on the name
of the Lord who so ever
- ed, a - sham - - ed shall not, shall

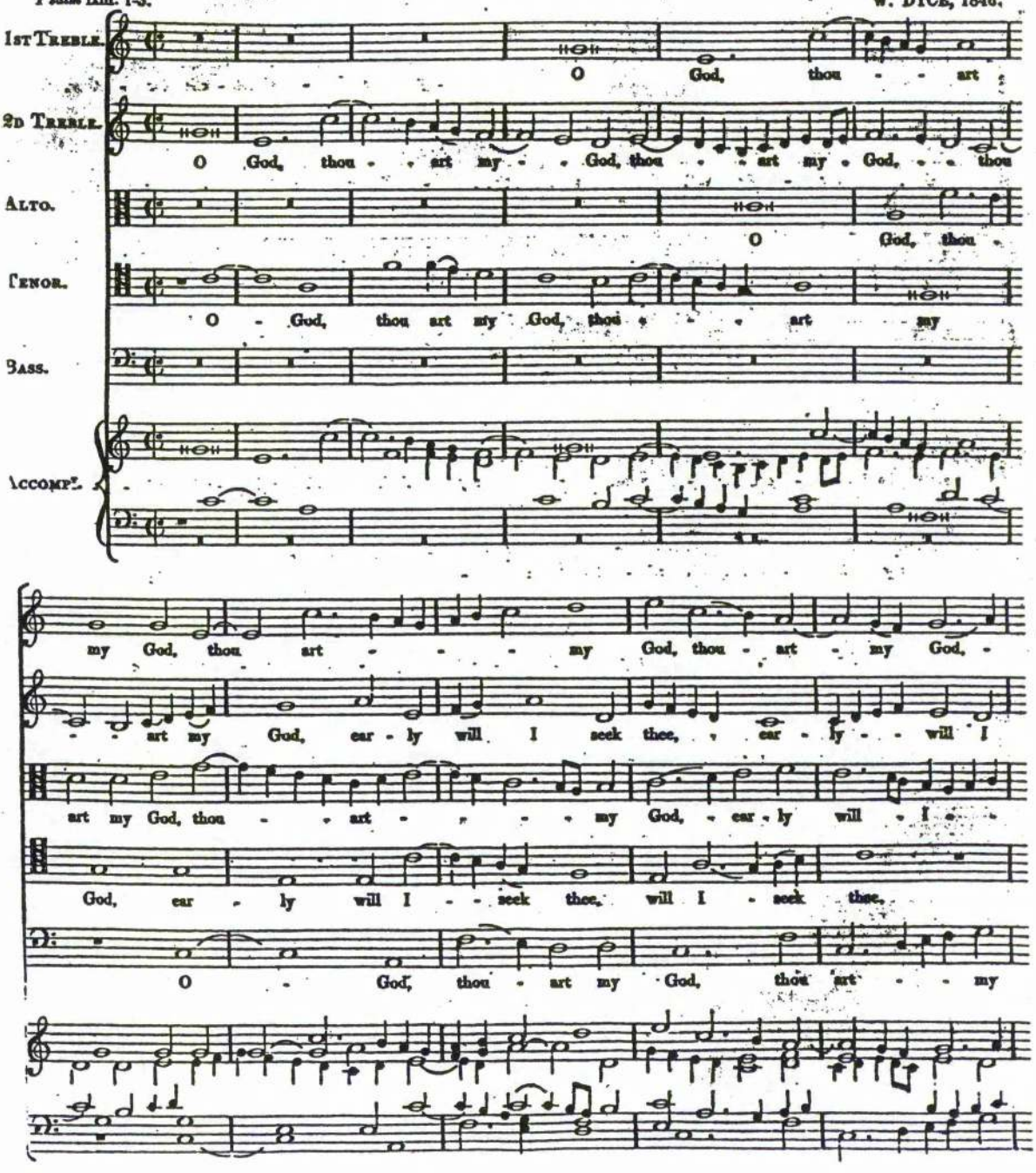

98
me us chri
stus
Al le lu - - - - ia Al le - lu - ia
shall be sa -
ed

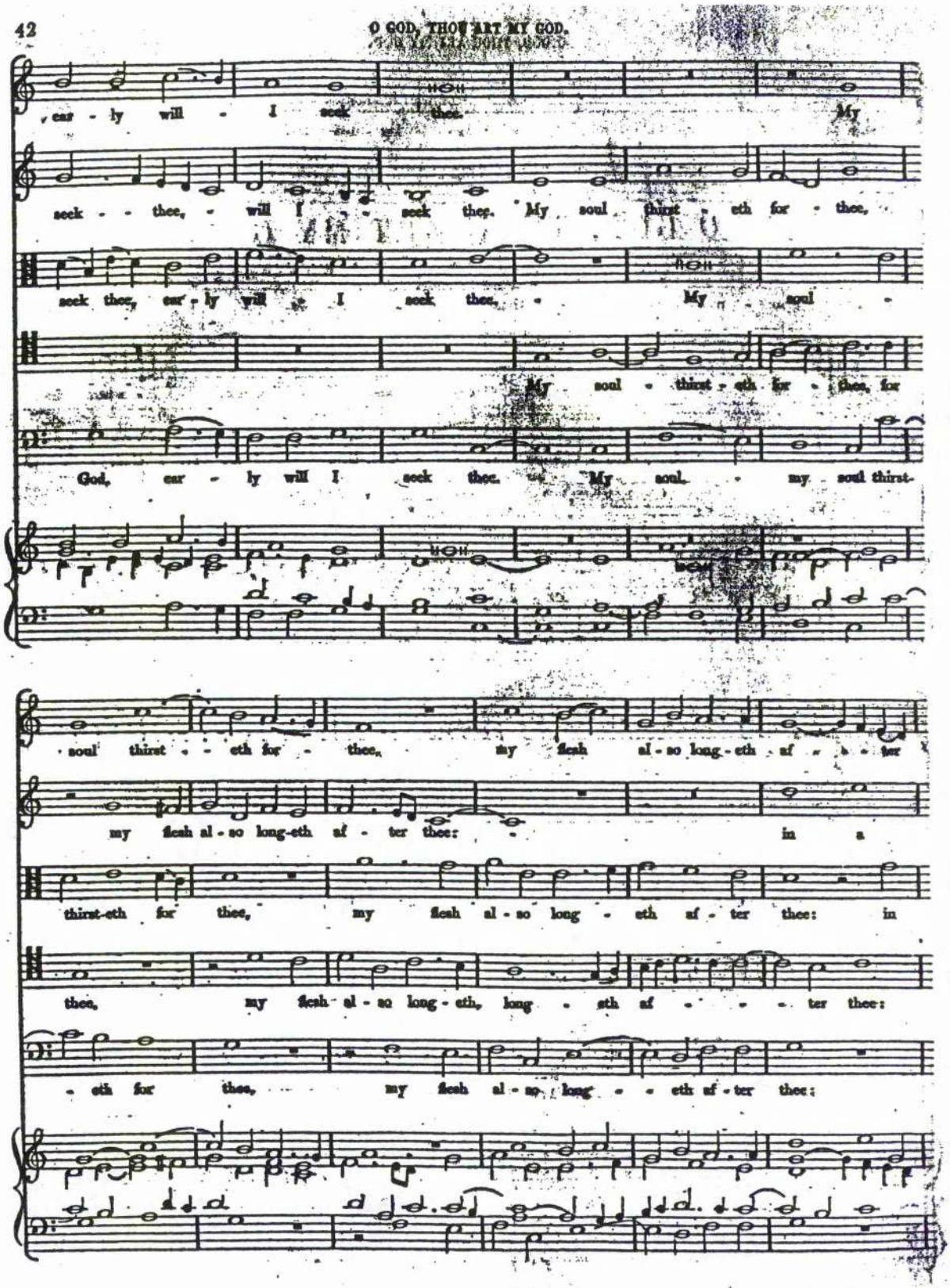

78
ait in - - te
shall call on the name of the Lord shall be save
not - te a - sham - - ed

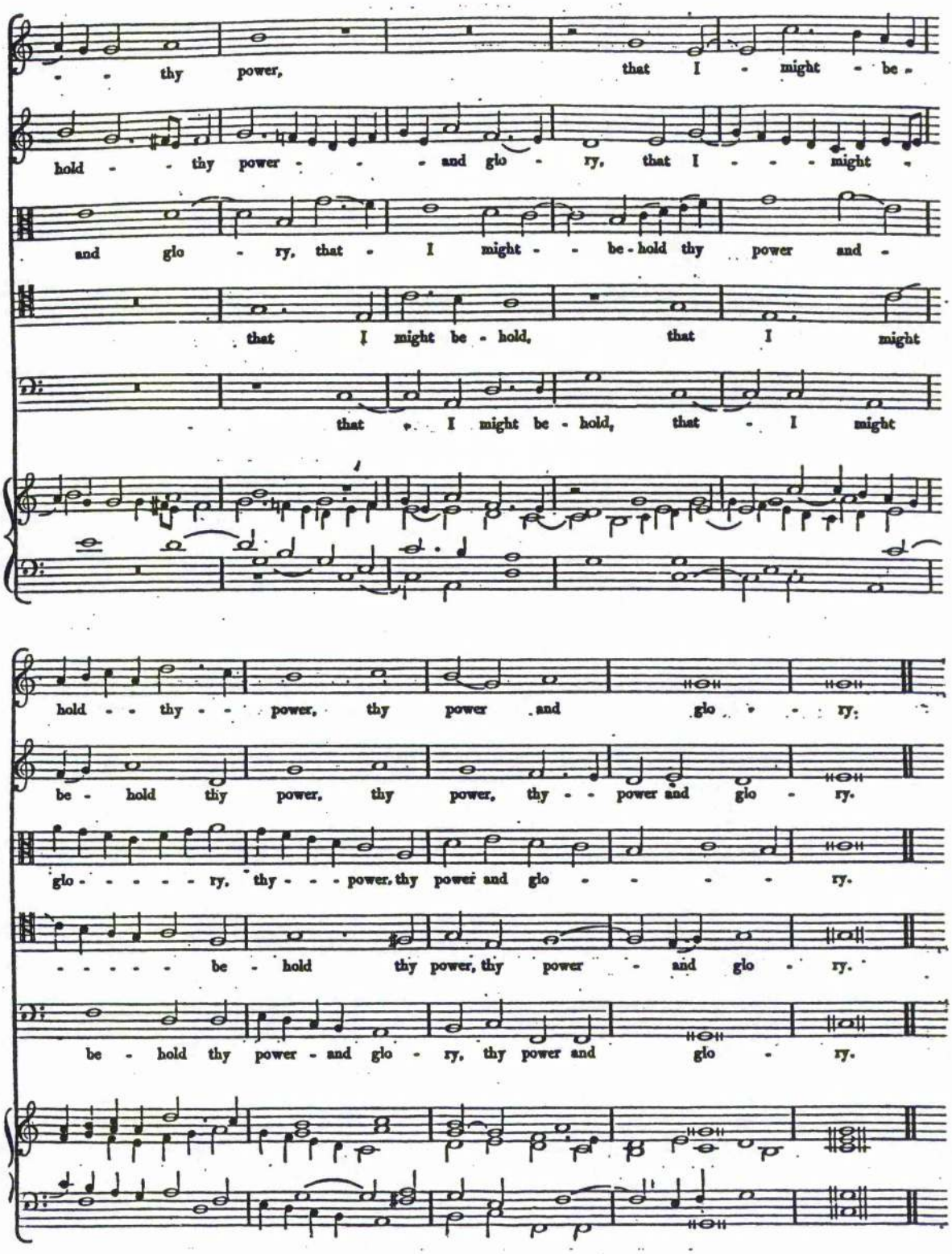

82
ma - gi - ster mous - trate
ed Al - le - lu - ja Al - le lui - ia Al le lu
- for who shall call on the name - - -

O GOD, THOU ART MY GOD.

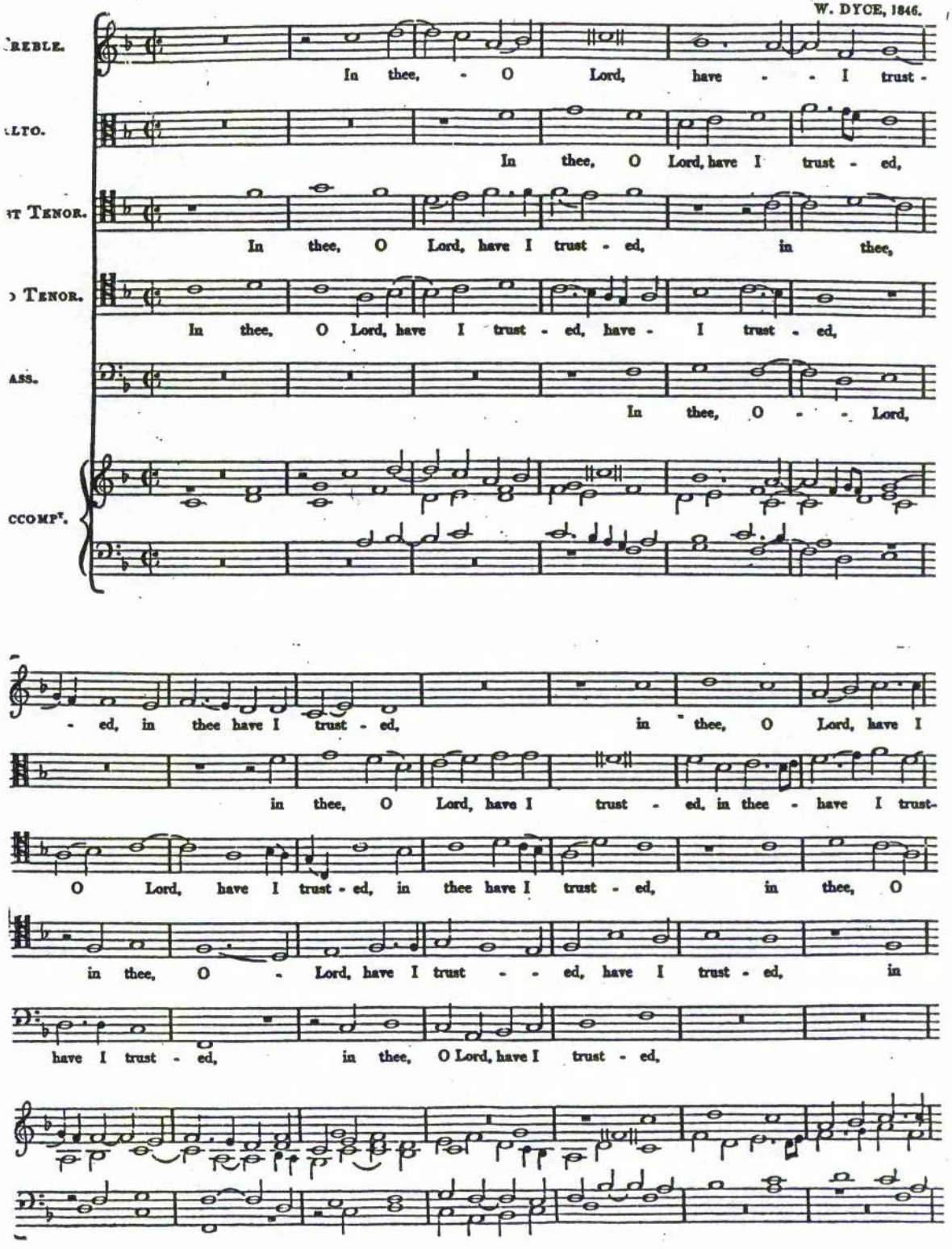
Psalm lxiii. 1-3. W. DYCE, 1846.



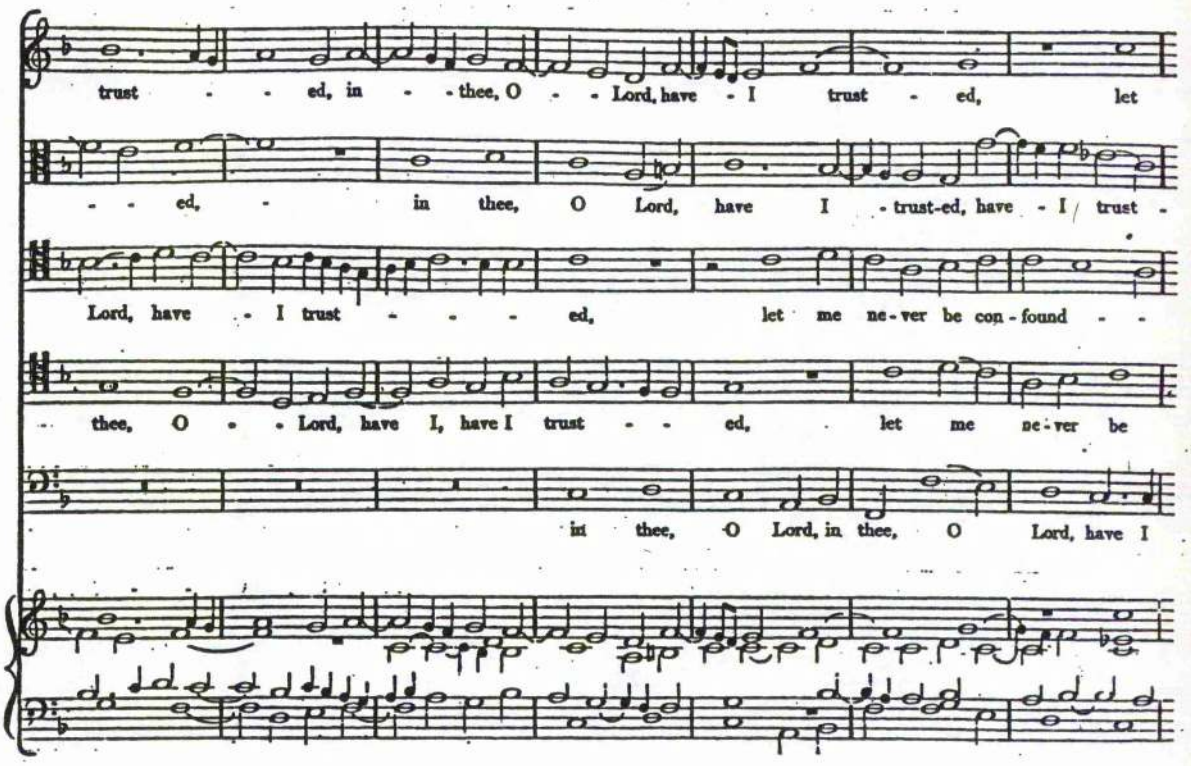

42
O GOD, THOU ART MY GOD.
ear - ly will - I seek thee. My
seek - - thee, - will I - seek thee. My soul thirst - eth for - thee,
seek thee, ear - ly will I seek thee, My - soul -
My soul - thirst - eth for - thee, for
God, ear - ly will I seek thee. My soul - my soul thirst-
soul thirst - - eth for - thee, my flesh al - so long - eth af - - - ter
my flesh al - so long-eth af - ter thee: in a
thirst-eth for thee, my flesh al - so long - eth af - ter thee: in
thee, my flesh al - so long - eth, long - eth af - - - - ter thee:
- eth for thee, my flesh al - so long - - eth af - ter thee:

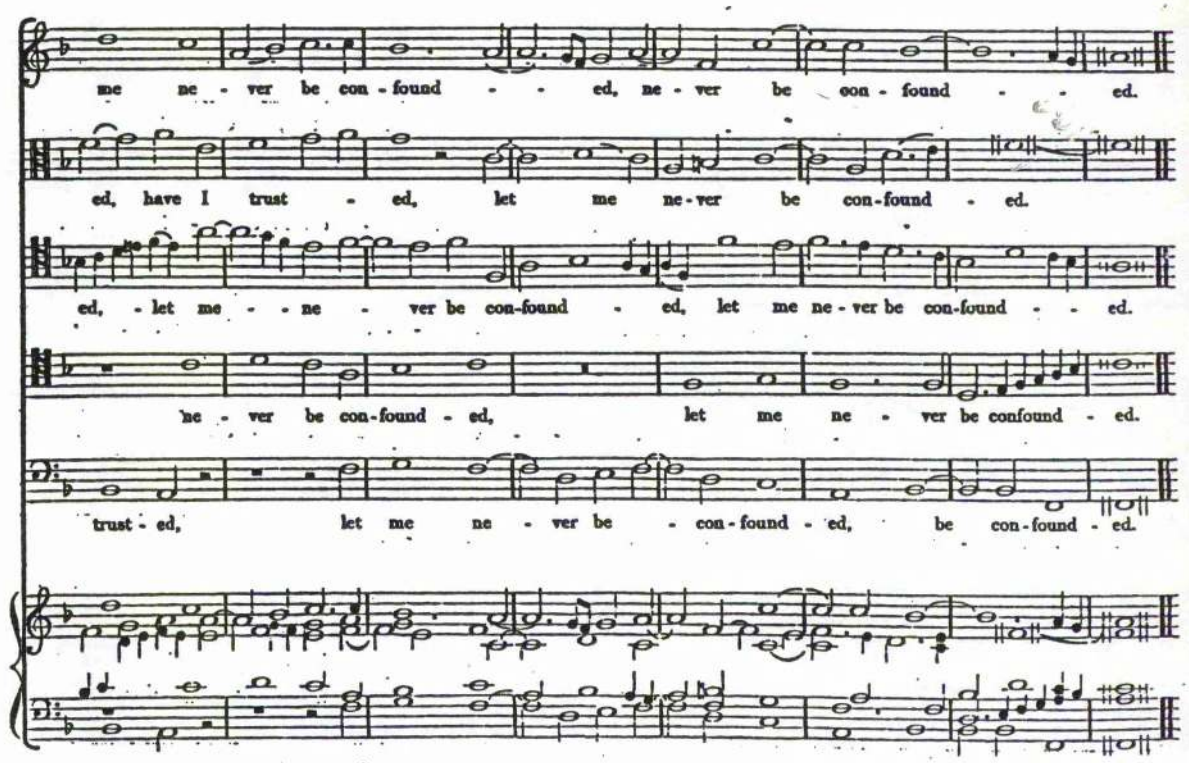

thy power, that I might be -
hold thy power and glo ry, that I might -
and glo ry, that I might be - hold thy power and -
that I might be - hold, that I might
that I might be - hold, that I might
hold thy power, thy power and glo ry.
be - hold thy power, thy power, thy power and glo - ry.
glo ry. thy power, thy power and glo ry.
be - hold thy power, thy power and glo - ry.
be - hold thy power and glo - ry, thy power and glo - ry.

IN THEE, O LORD, HAVE I TRUSTED.

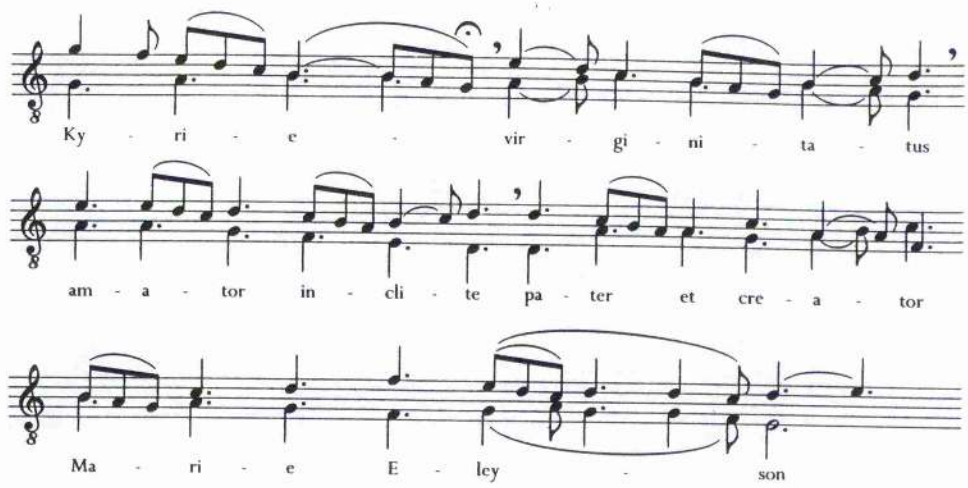


158 IN THEE, O LORD, HAVE I TRUSTED.

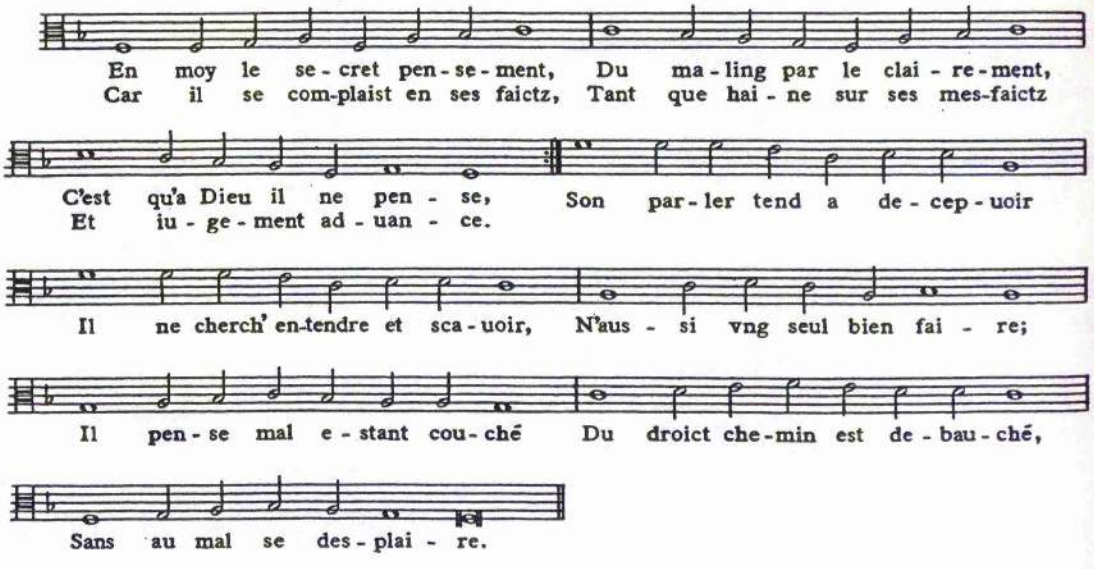




KYRIE VIRGINITATUS AMATOR (*St Andrews Music Book*, W1 f177v)

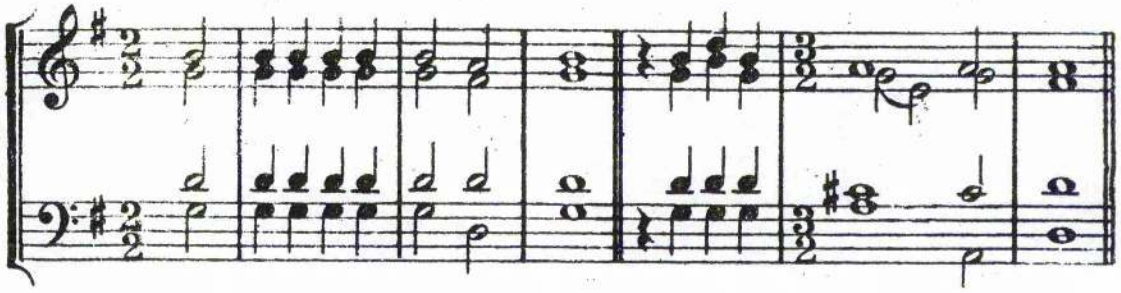


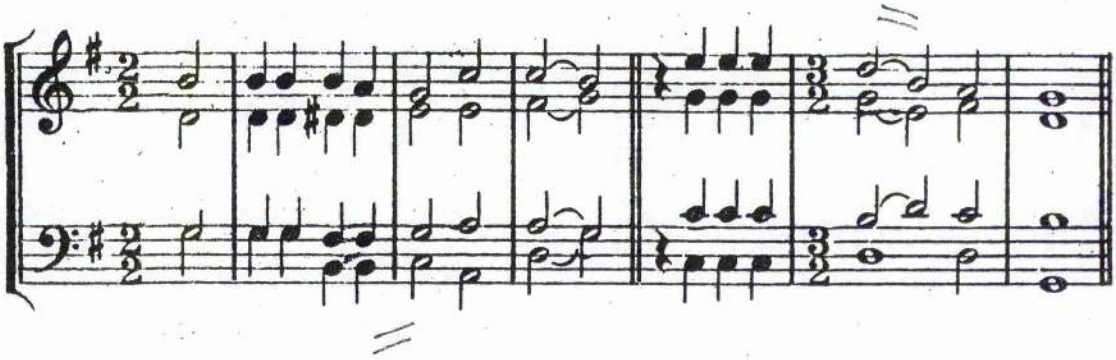
8—PSALME XXXVI



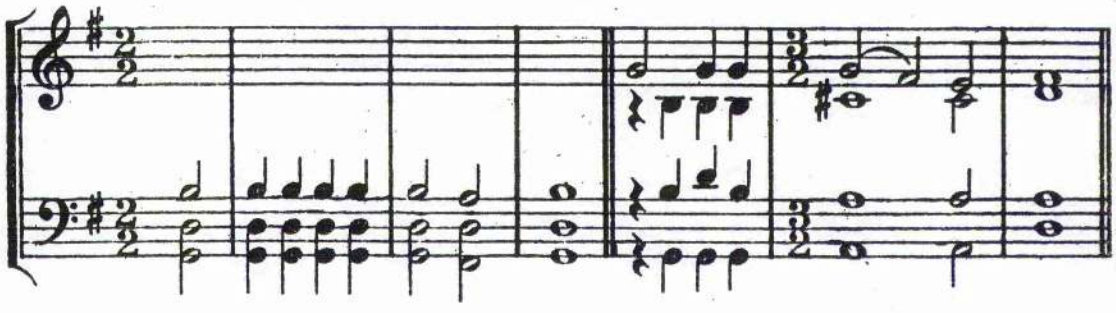
Kedron.

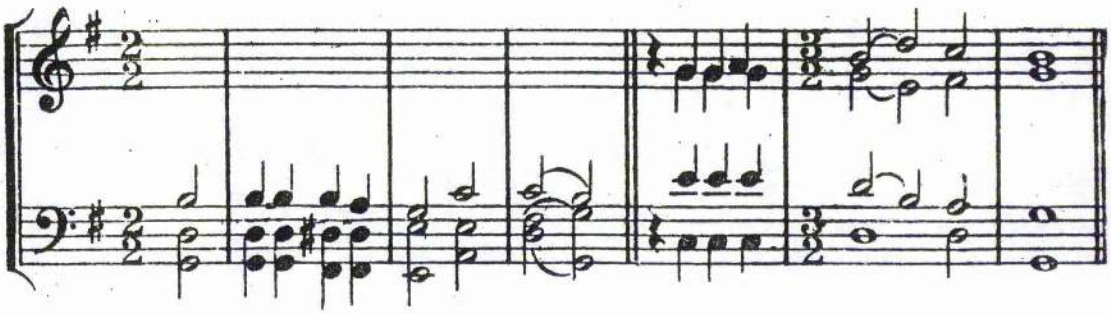
Arr. by HUGH S. ROBERTON.

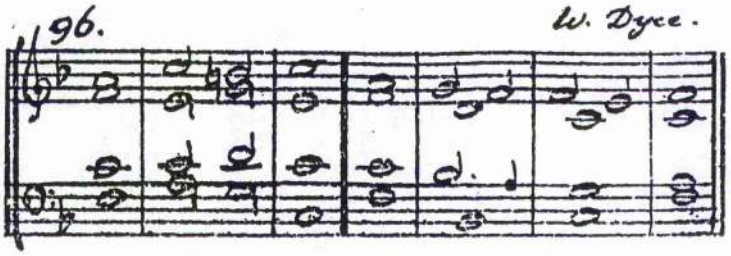




Faux Bourdon. (*Melody in the Tenor.*)







The East of Fife Record

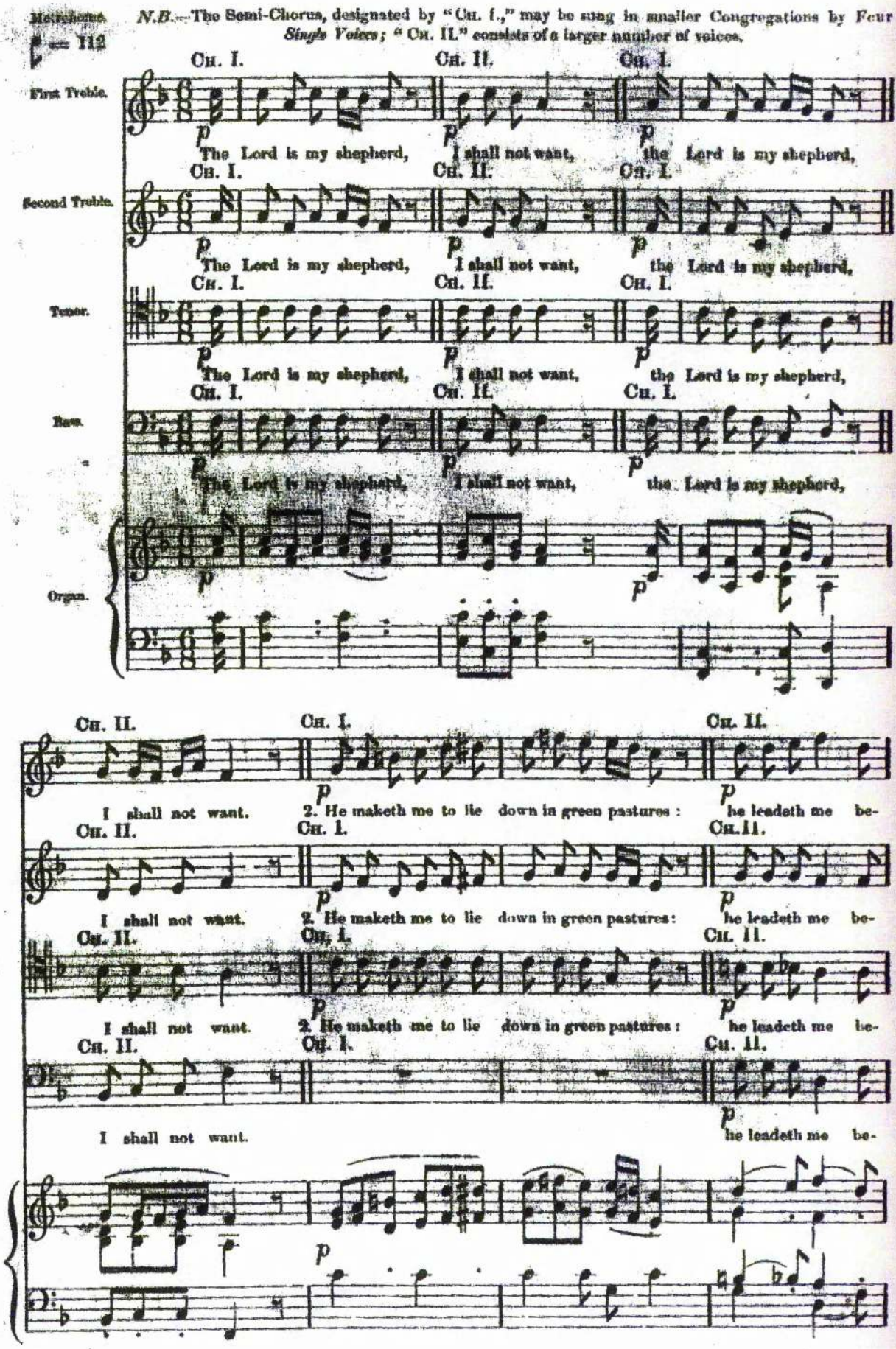
AND ADVERTISER FOR

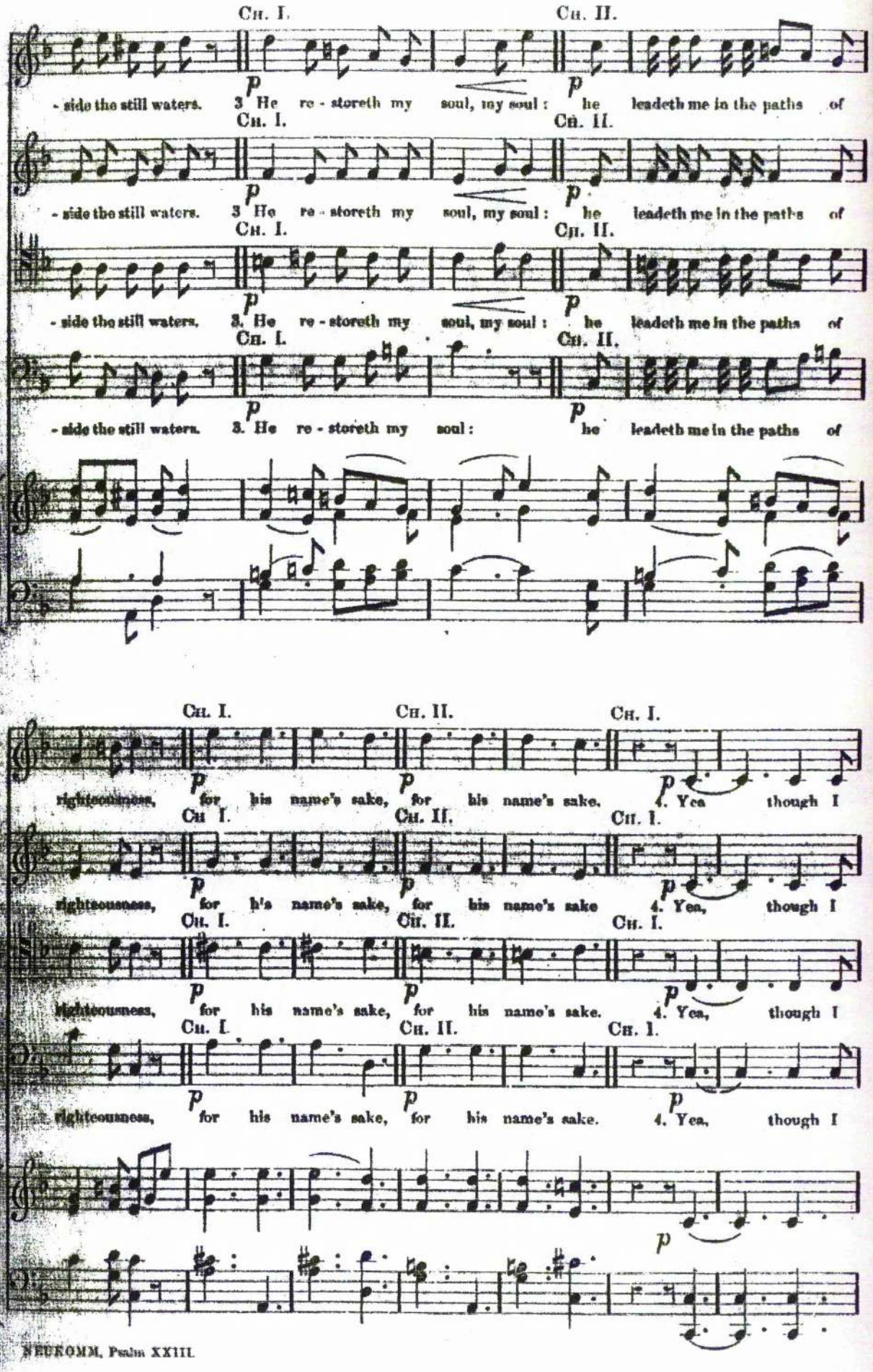
ANSTRUTHER, PITTENWEEM, CELLARDYKE, CRAIL, ST MONANCE, ELIE, LEVEN, &c.

PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY MORNING.

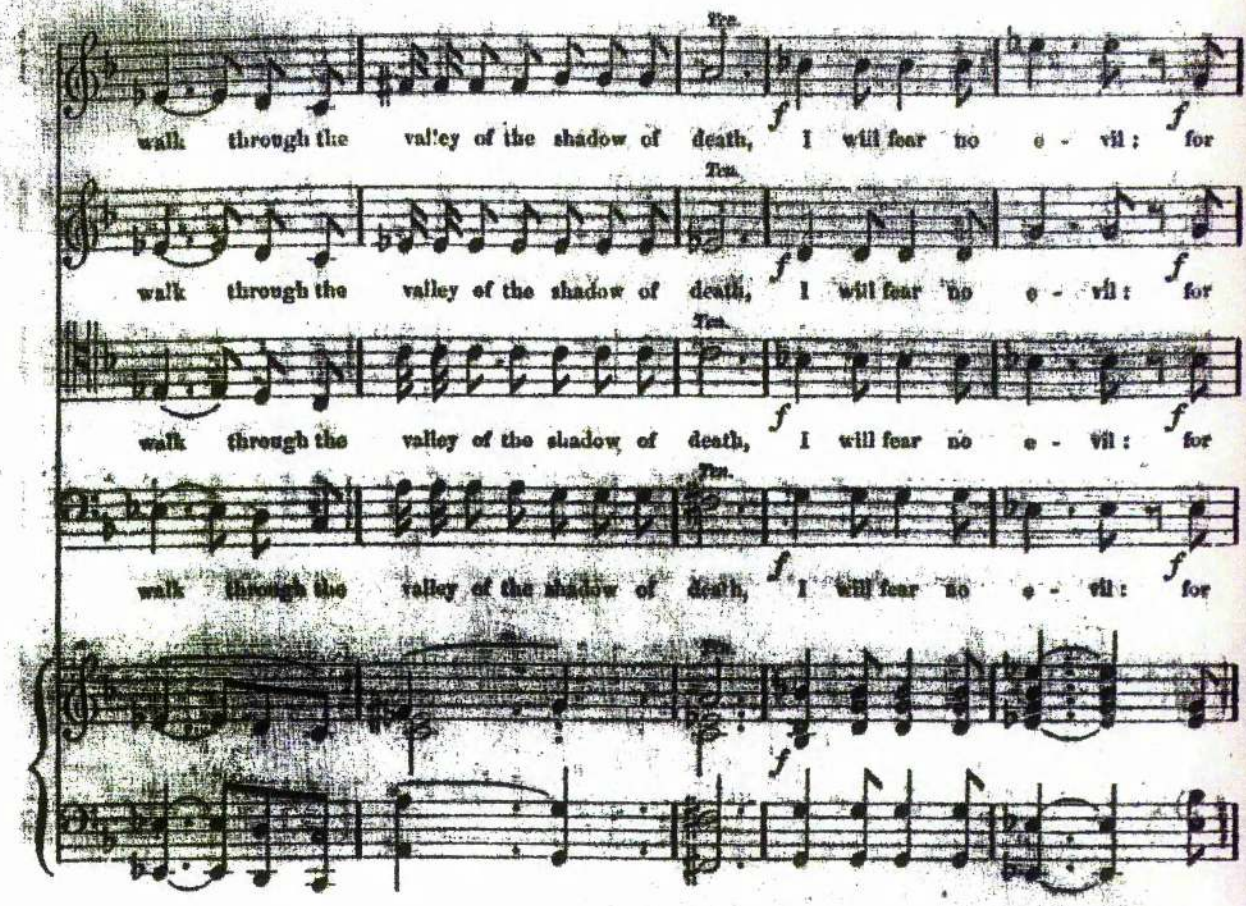
No. 1668. [REGISTERED AT THE GENERAL POST-OFFICE AS A NEWSPAPER.] ANSTRUTHER, SEPTEMBER 28, 1888. PRICE 1d

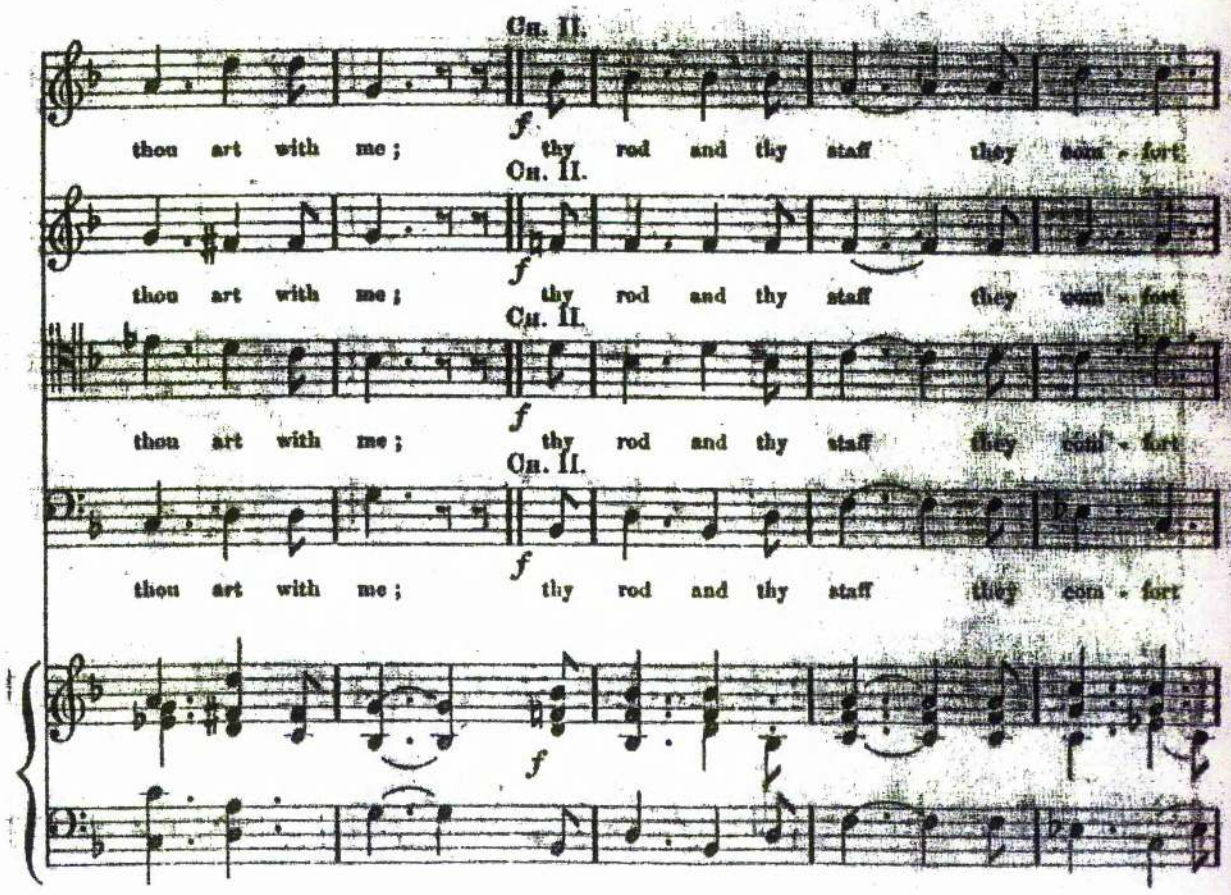
ANSTRUTHER U. P. CHURCH AND INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC.—A congregational meeting was held on Tuesday evening—Rev. Mr Smith presiding—to consider the introduction of instrumental music into the services of the church. The chairman gave a short sketch of the different changes in the service of praise of the church for the last 38 years, and remarked that he did not know of any church where the improvement had not been favourably received. There was no doubt the use of an instrument in a church was a very desirable thing if used in a proper way. It was a help to the choir, and encouragement to the congregation. A motion was then made that the matter be gone into, and a show of hands indicated that all present were agreeable to the change. A committee was then appointed to go round the congregation and solicit subscriptions, after which the meeting terminated.

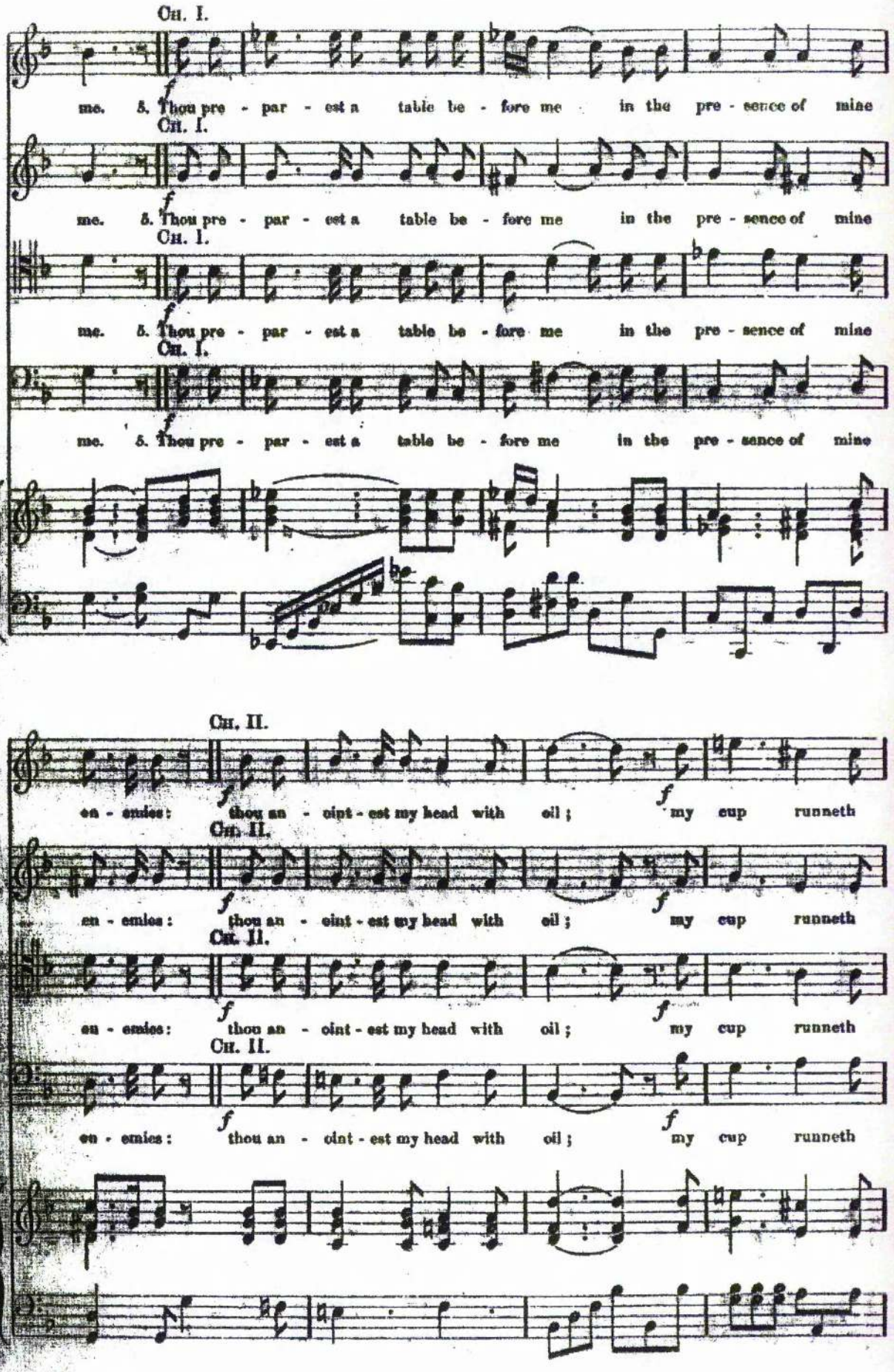

Metronome. ♩ = 112
N.B.—The Semi-Chorus, designated by "Ch. I.," may be sung in smaller Congregations by Four Single Voices; "Ch. II." consists of a larger number of voices.
First Treble.
Second Treble.
Tenor.
Bass.
Organ.
Ch. I.
Ch. II.
The Lord is my shepherd,
I shall not want,
the Lord is my shepherd,
I shall not want.
2. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
he leadeth me be-

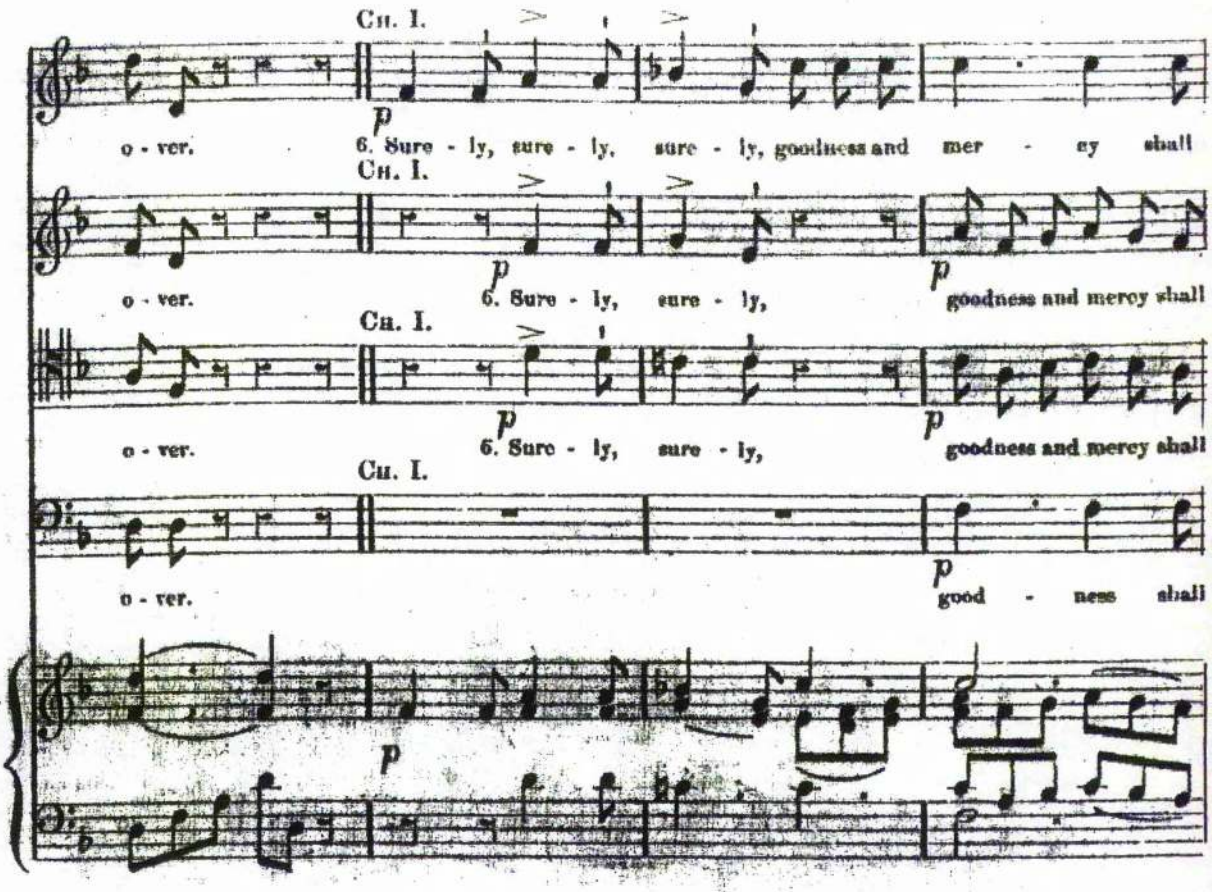

Ch. I.
Ch. II.
- side the still waters. 3 He re - storeth my soul, my soul : he leadeth me in the paths of
righteousness, for his name's sake, for his name's sake. 4. Yea though I

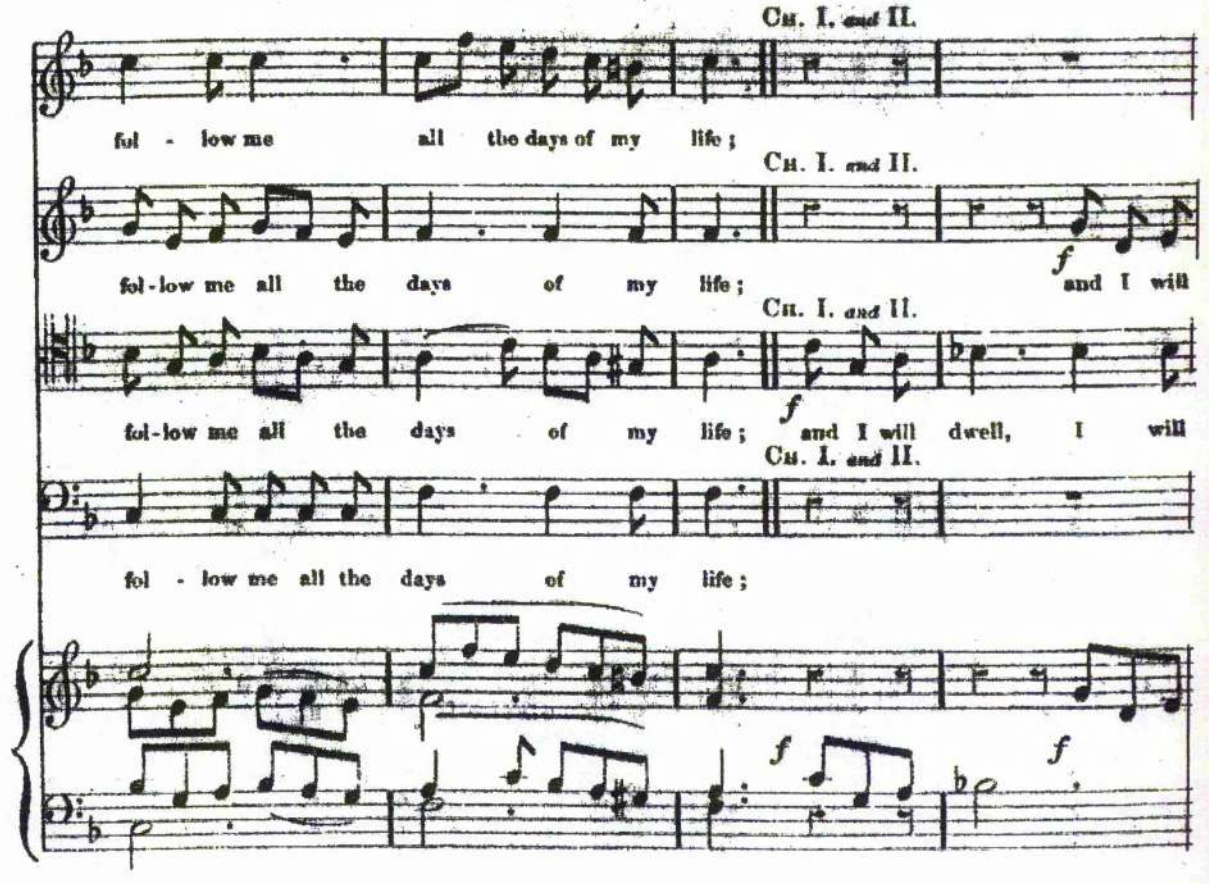
20 PSALM XXIII.

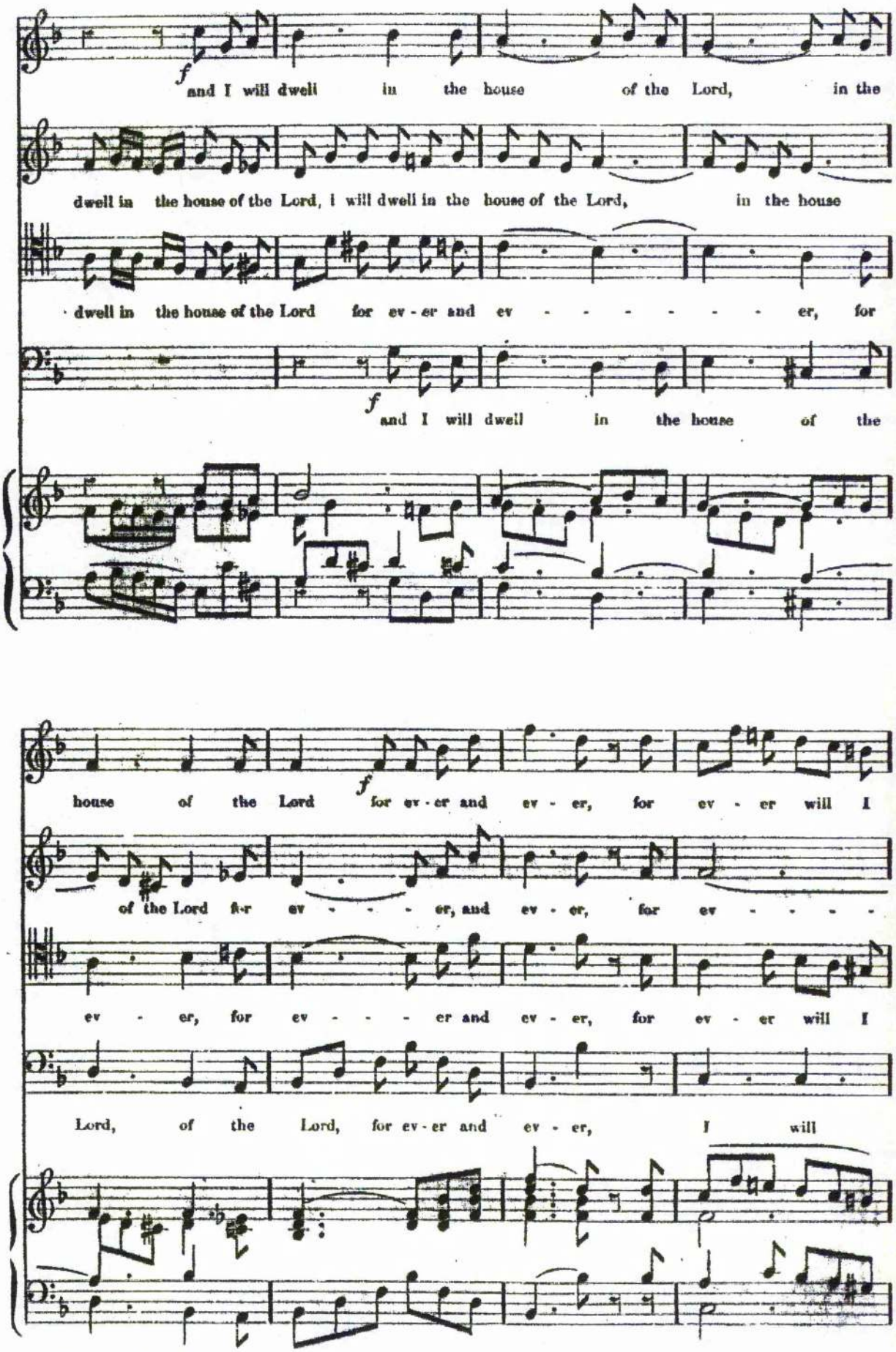


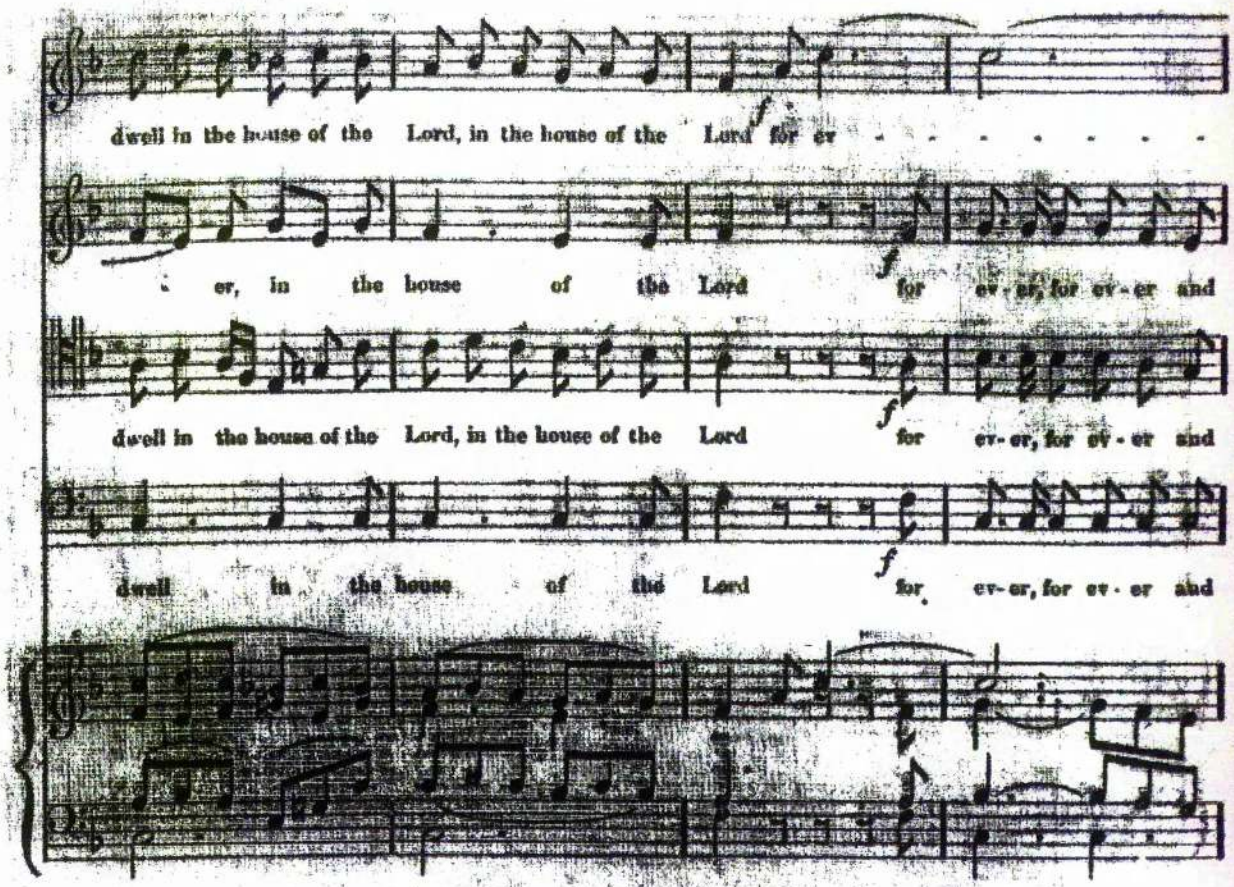


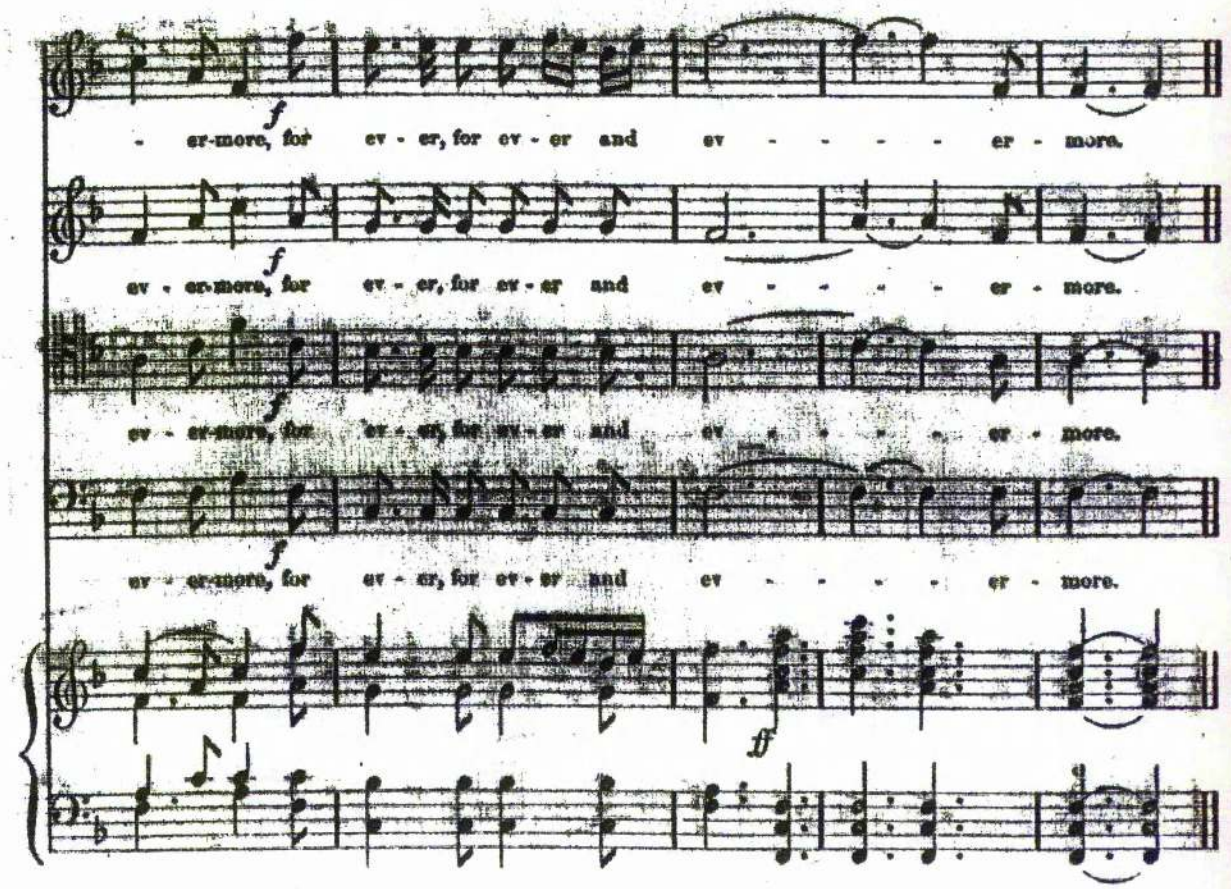

Ch. I.
me. 5. Thou pre - par - est a table be - fore me in the pre - sence of mine
Ch. II.
en - emies: thou an - oint - est my head with oil; my cup runneth


Ch. I.
o - ver.
6. Sure - ly, sure - ly, sure - ly, goodness and mer - cy shall
Ch. I.
o - ver.
6. Sure - ly, sure - ly,
goodness and mercy shall
Ch. I.
o - ver.
6. Sure - ly, sure - ly,
goodness and mercy shall
Ch. I.
o - ver.
good - ness shall


Ch. I. and II.
fol - low me all the days of my life;
Ch. I. and II.
fol-low me all the days of my life;
and I will
Ch. I. and II.
fol-low me all the days of my life;
and I will dwell, I will
Ch. I. and II.
fol - low me all the days of my life;


f
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord, in the
dwell in the house of the Lord, I will dwell in the house of the Lord, in the house
dwell in the house of the Lord for ev - er and ev - - - - - - - er, for
f
and I will dwell in the house of the
f
house of the Lord for ev - er and ev - er, for ev - er will I
of the Lord for ev - - - - er, and ev - er, for ev - - - -
ev - er, for ev - - - - er and ev - er, for ev - er will I
Lord, of the Lord, for ev - er and ev - er, I will

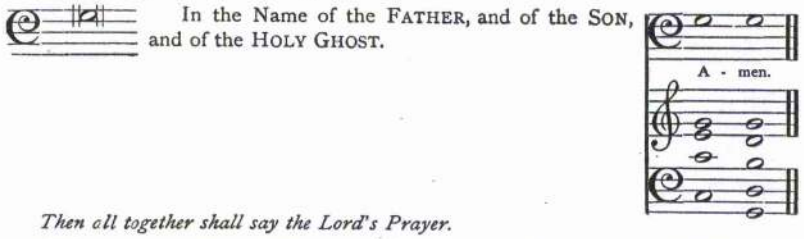

dwell in the house of the Lord, in the house of the Lord for ev
er, in the house of the Lord for ev-er, for ev-er and
dwell in the house of the Lord, in the house of the Lord for ev-er, for ev-er and
dwell in the house of the Lord for ev-er, for ev-er and


er-more, for ev-er, for ev-er and ev er more.
ev-er-more, for ev-er, for ev-er and ev er more.
ev-er-more, for ev-er, for ev-er and ev er more.
ev-er-more, for ev-er, for ev-er and ev er more.

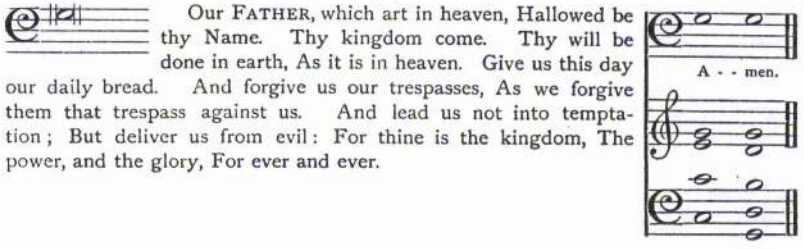
Office

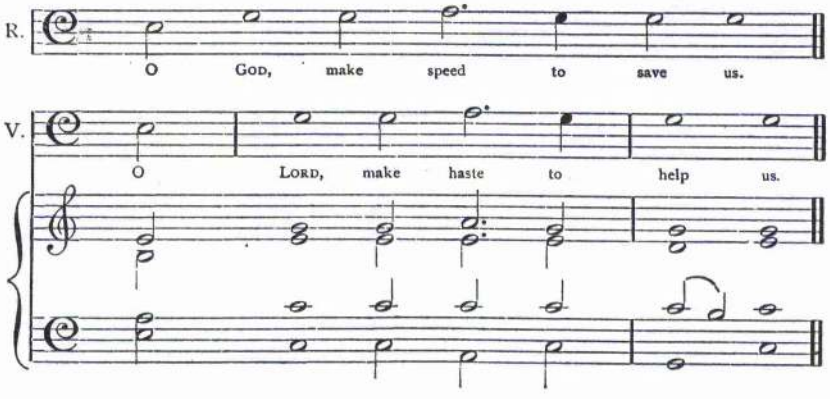
FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING.

All kneeling, let the Reader begin.

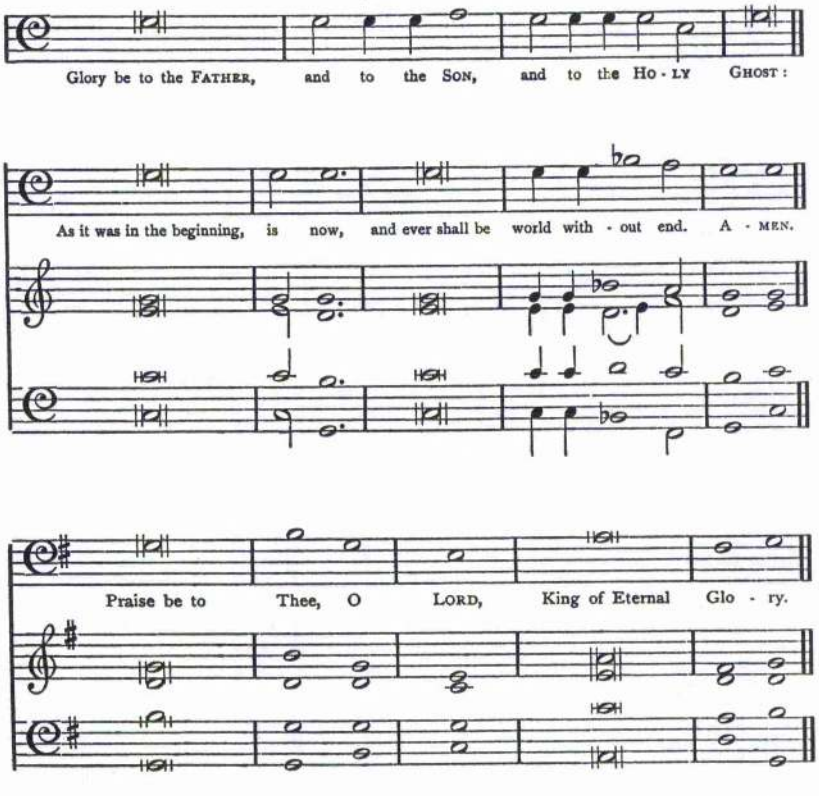


Then all together shall say the Lord's Prayer.

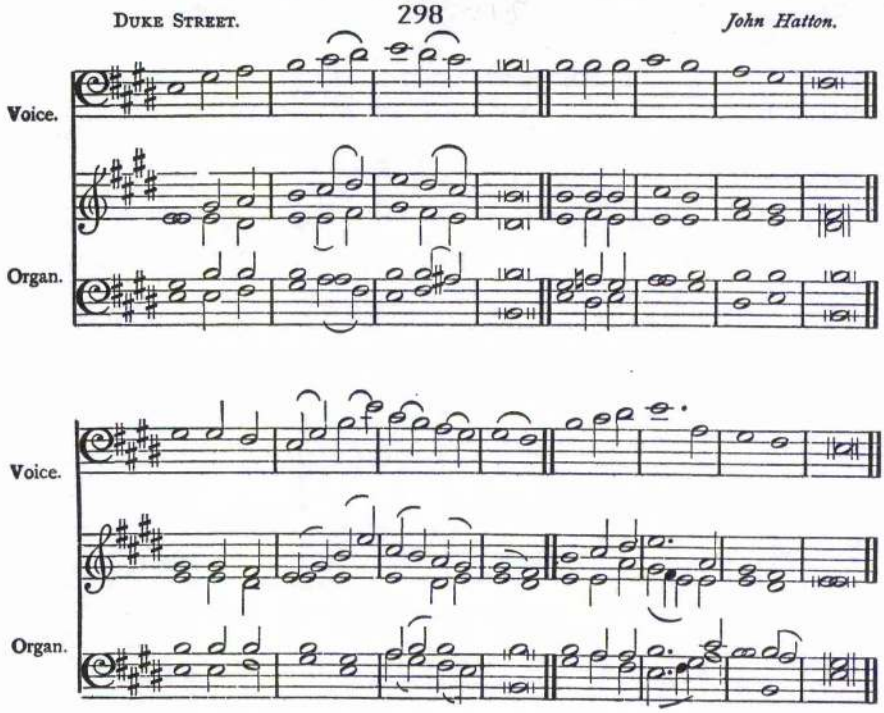




Here, all standing up, the Reader shall say:



DUKE STREET. 298 *John Hatton.*



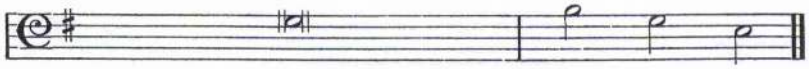
THOU shalt arise, and mercy yet
Thou to Mount Zion shalt extend;
Her time for favour which was set,
Behold, is now come to an end.

Thy saints take pleasure in her stones,
Her very dust to them is dear.
All heathen lands, and kingly thrones
On earth Thy glorious Name shall fear.

God in His glory shall appear,
When Zion He builds and repairs.
He shall regard and lend His ear
Unto the needy's humble prayers.

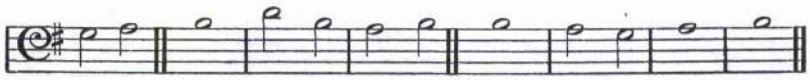
Th' afflicted's prayer He will not scorn.
All times this shall be on record;
And generations yet unborn
Shall praise and magnify the LORD.

Then shall the Reader say the Antiphon:



LORD, I have loved the habitation of Thy House.

Psalm lxxxiv. *Quam dilecta!*



m.p. O HOW am'iable | are thy | dwellings: thou' | Lord | —of | hosts!

2. My soul hath a desire and longing to en'ter into the | courts · of the | Lord: my heart and my flesh' re | joice · in the | living | God.
3. Yea, the sparrow hath found her an house, and the swallow a nest where she' may | lay her | young: even thy altars, O Lord of hosts', my | King, | and my | God.

cres. 4. Blessed are they' that | dwell in · thy | house: they' will be | alway | praising | thee.
5. Blessed is the man' whose | strength is · in thee: in' whose | heart are | thy | ways.
6. Who going through the vale of misery use' it | for a | well: and the pools' are | filled with | wa | ter.

f. 7. They will go' from | strength to | strength: and unto the God of gods appeareth every one' of | them in | Zi | on.

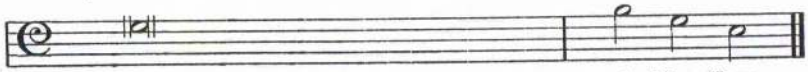
p. 8. O Lord God of hosts', | hear my | prayer: hearken, O' | God of | Ja | cob.
9. Behold, O God' | our de | fender: and look upon the face' of | thine A | noint | ed.

cr. 10. For one day' in | thy | courts: is bet'ter | than a | thou | sand.
11. I had rather be a doorkeeper in' the | house of · my | God: than to dwell' in the | tents | of · un | godliness.

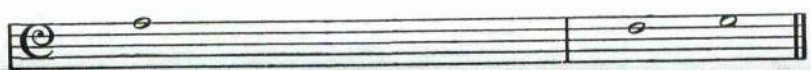
f. 12. For the Lord God' is a | light · and de | fence: the Lord will give grace and worship, and no good thing shall he withhold from them' that | live a | god-ly | life.
13. O Lord' | God of | hosts: blessed is the man' that | putteth his | trust in | thee.

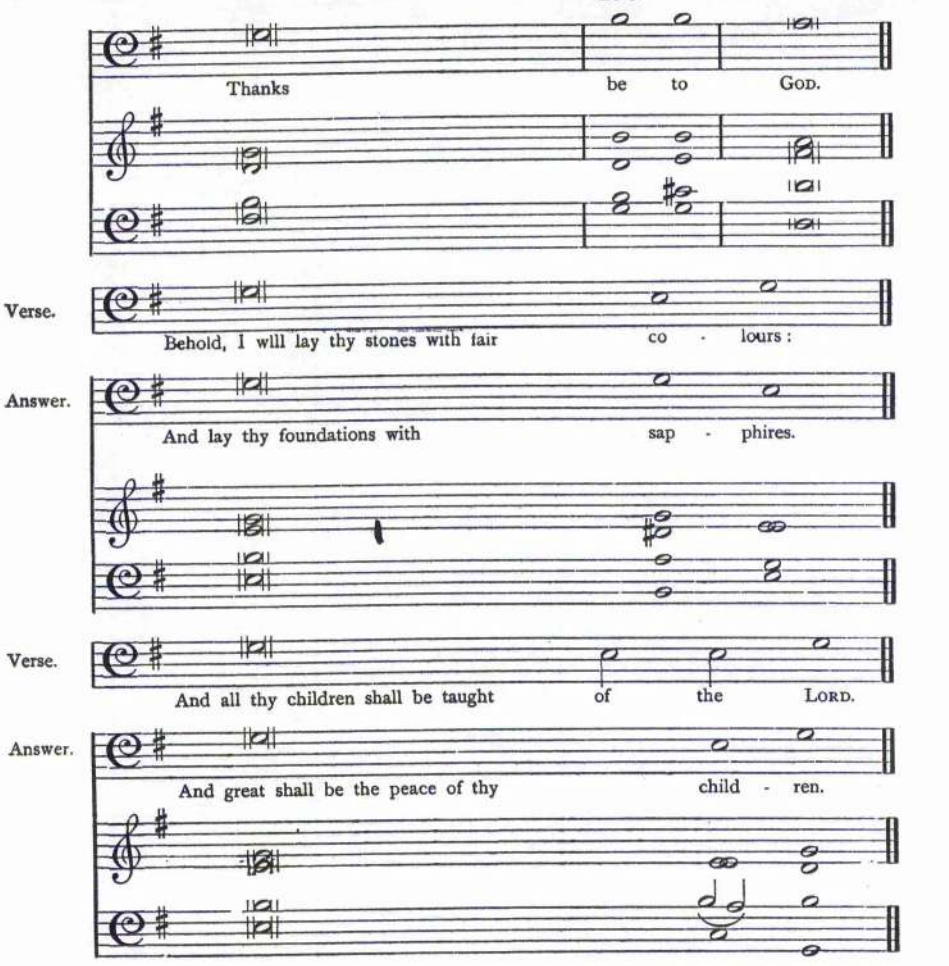
Glory be to the FA'THER, and | to the | SON: and' | to the | HOLY GHOST; As it was in the beginning, is now', and | ever shall | be: world without end'' **Amen.**

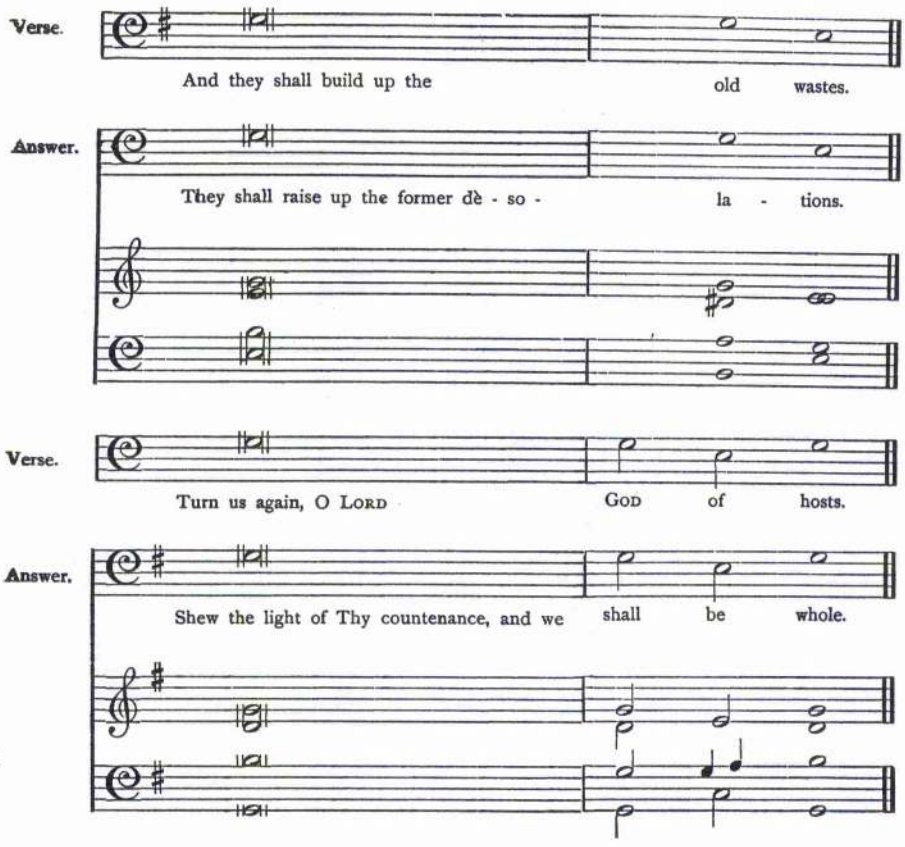
Then let all together sing the Antiphon:



Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy House.

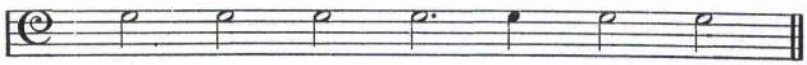


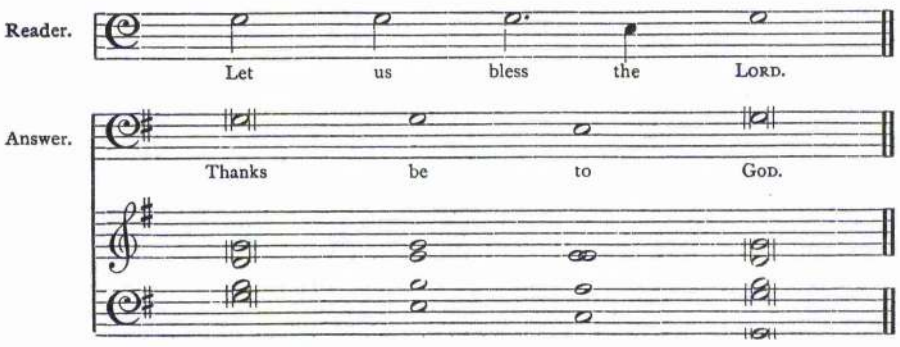




[ADDRESS.]

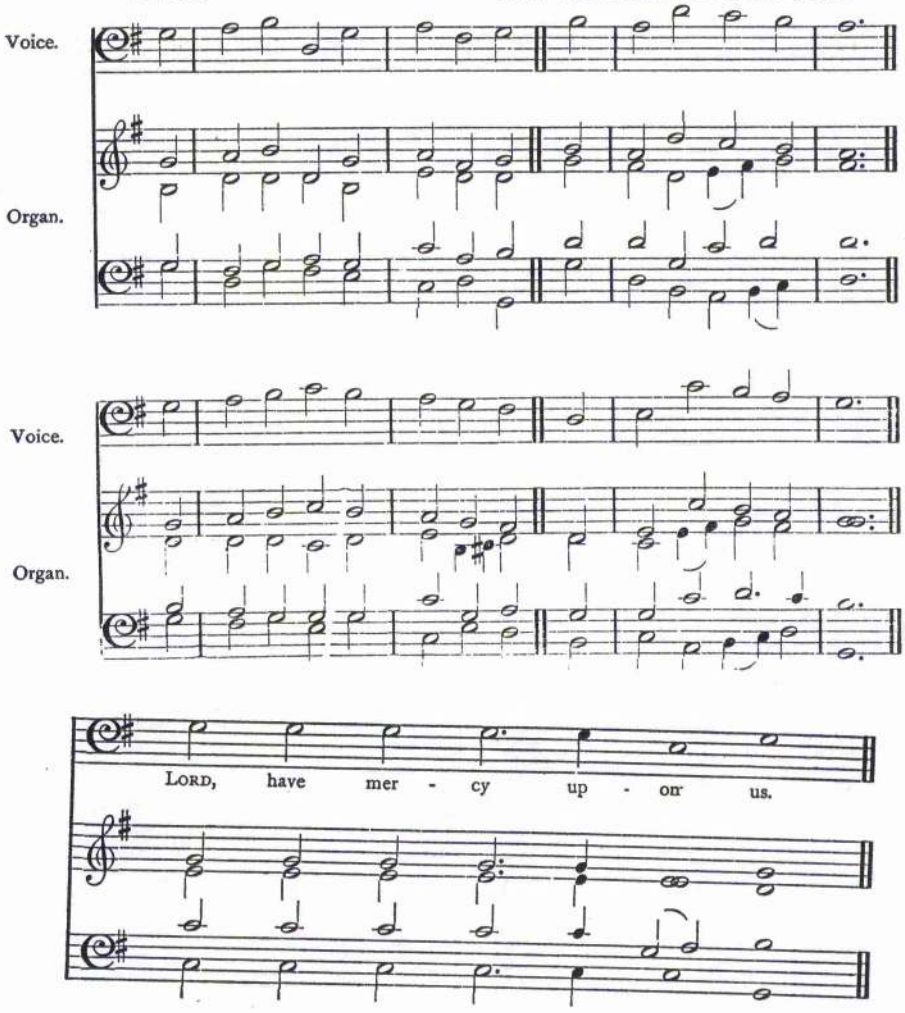
Let us pray.





PSALM CXXII. (6-9.)

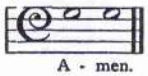
S. PAUL. *From Robert Bremner's Collection, 1756.*



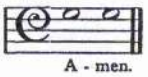
Collect for the Day.

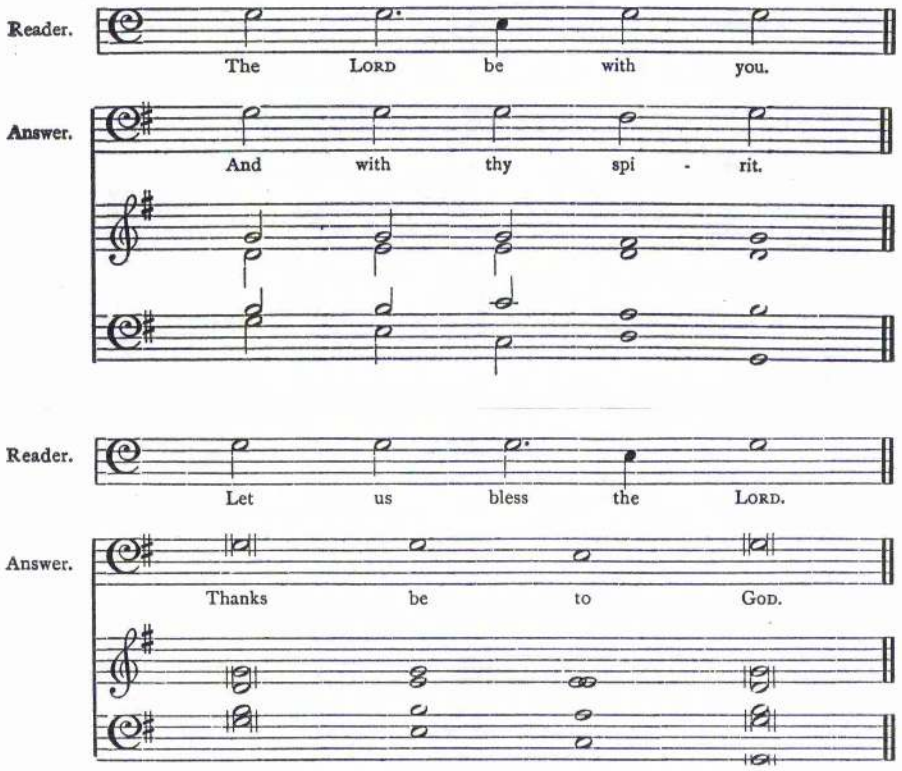
Collect for the Society.

Almighty and Everlasting God, who of old didst fill with Thy Spirit in wisdom and understanding the builders of Thy tabernacle, Vouchsafe, we beseech Thee, Thy grace and blessing to Thy servants: enlighten, purify, direct, and sanctify them; and prosper their efforts for the honour of Thy house and service. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end.



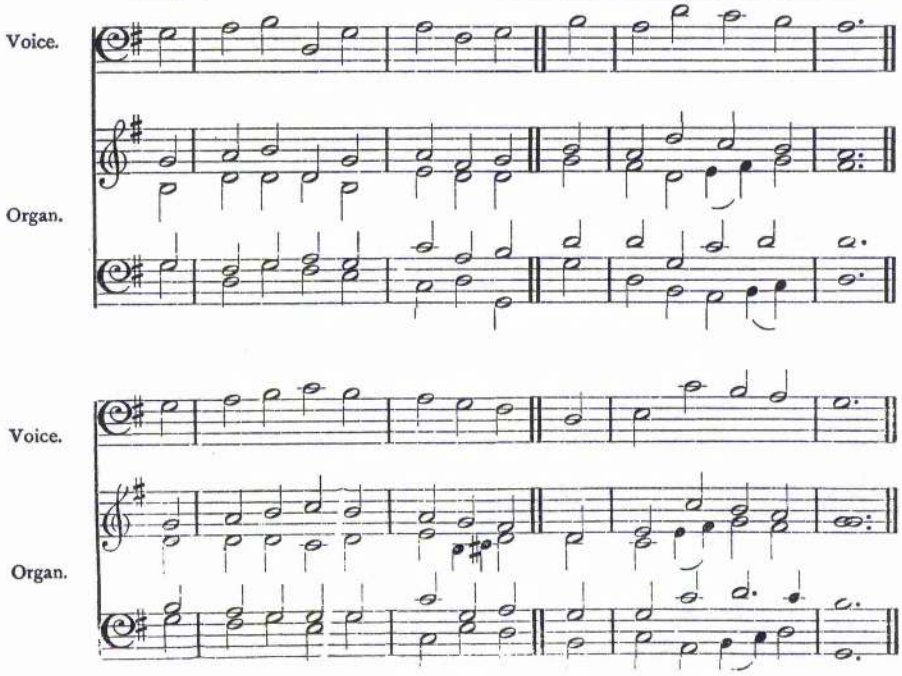
Prevent us, O God, in all our doings with Thy most gracious favour, and further us with Thy continual help; that in all our works, begun, continued, and ended in Thee, we may glorify Thy holy Name, and finally by Thy mercy obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.



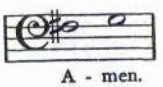


Psalm cxxii. (6-9.)

S. Paul. *From Robert Bremner's Collection, 1756.*



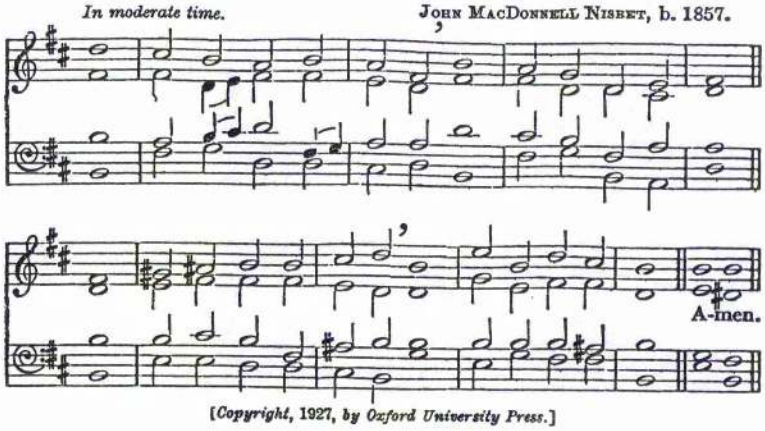
The Blessing.



Thou standest at the altar

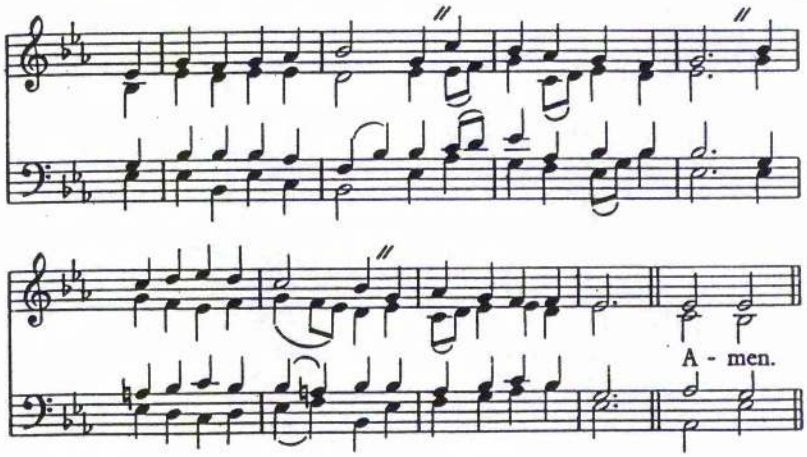
315 CARDEN PLACE. (76. 76.)

In moderate time. JOHN MACDONNELL NISBET, b. 1857.



575 CHRISTUS DER IST MEIN LEBEN (BREMEN) 7676

Melody by MELCHIOR VULPIUS, *c.* 1560–1615



THOU standest at the altar,
Thou offerest every prayer;
In faith's unclouded vision
We see thee ever there.

2 Out of thy hand the incense
Ascends before the throne,
Where thou art interceding,
Lord Jesus, for thine own.

3 And, through thy blood accepted,
With thee we keep the feast:
Thou art the one Oblation;
Thou only art the Priest.

4 We come, O only Saviour;
On thee, the Lamb, we feed:
Thy flesh is bread from heaven;
Thy blood is drink indeed.

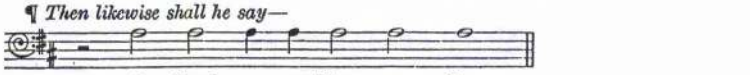
5 *To thee, Almighty Father;*
Incarnate Son, to thee;
To thee, Anointing Spirit,—
All praise and glory be. Amen.

Edward Wilton Eddis, 1825–1905
(*altered*)

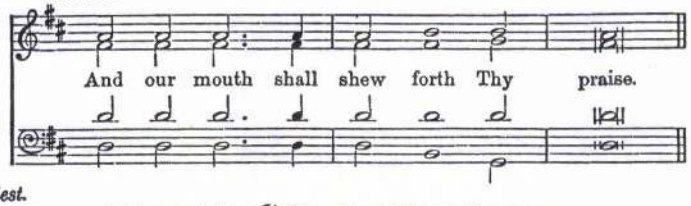
TALLIS'S FESTAL RESPONSES AND LITANY[1]

THE opening part of the Service should be monotoned, as stated on p. 1.

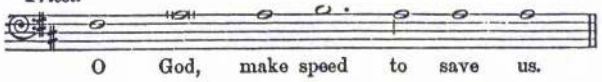
¶ *Then likewise shall he say—*



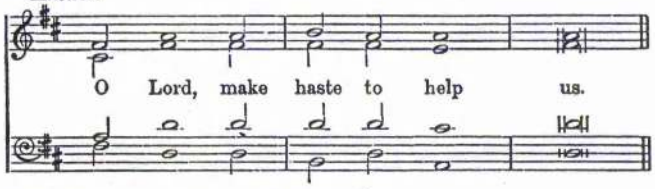
Answer.



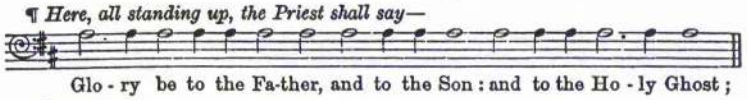
Priest.

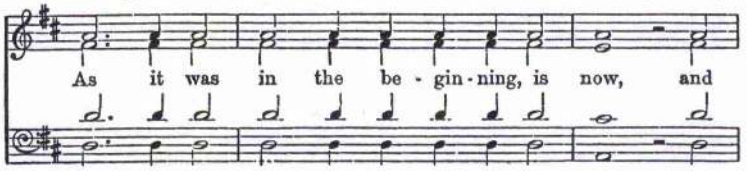


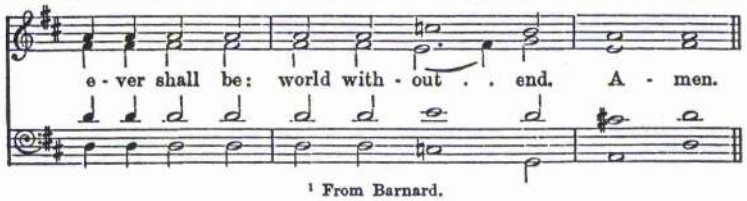
Answer.



¶ *Here, all standing up, the Priest shall say—*

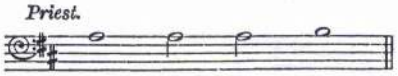




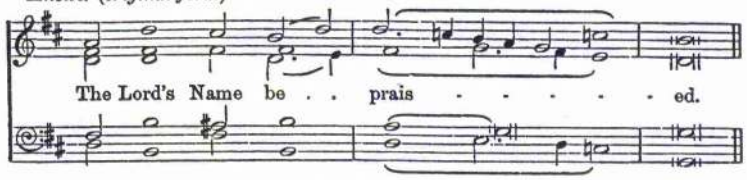


[1] From Barnard.

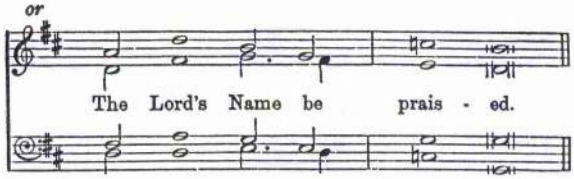
Priest.

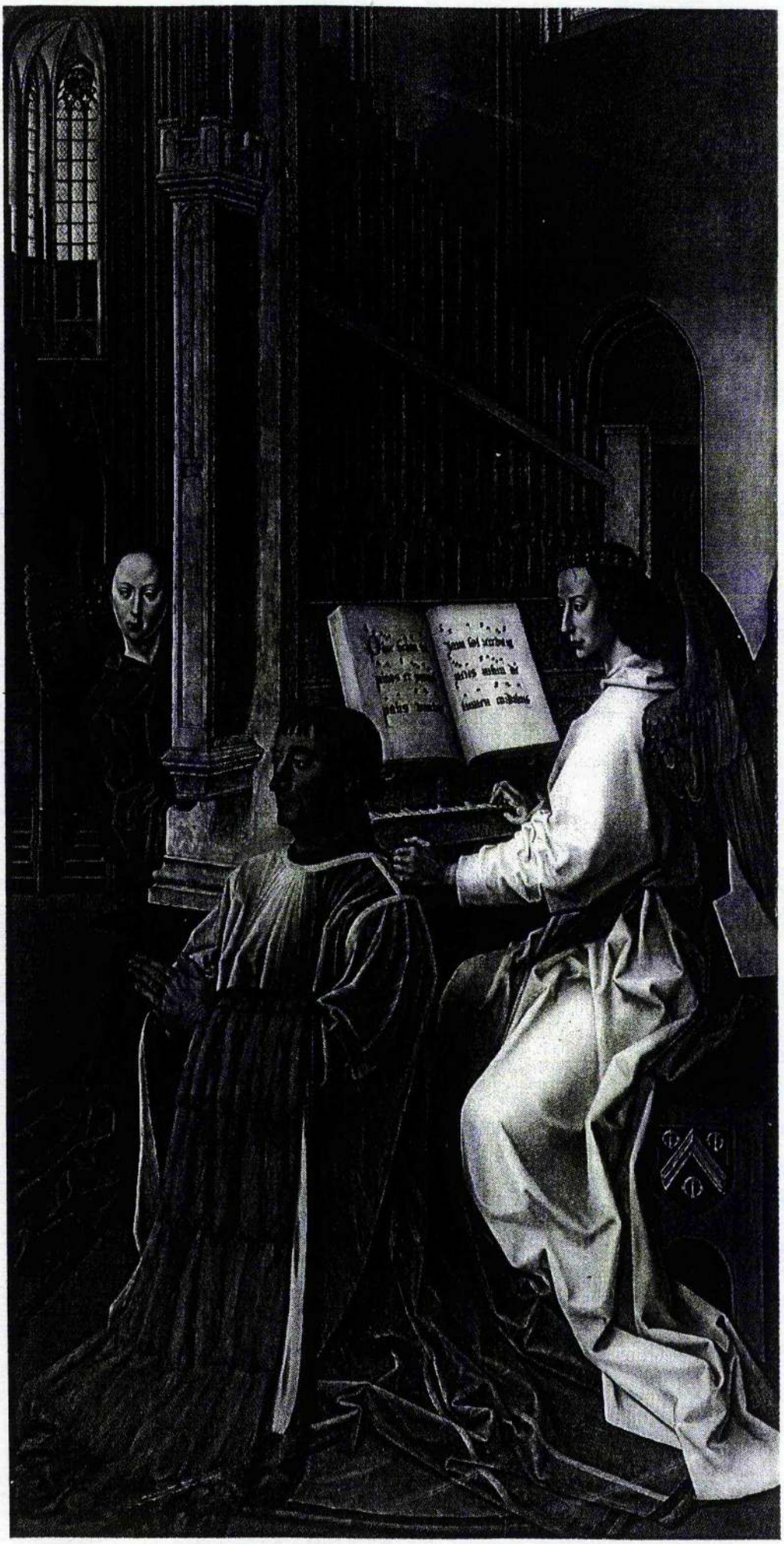


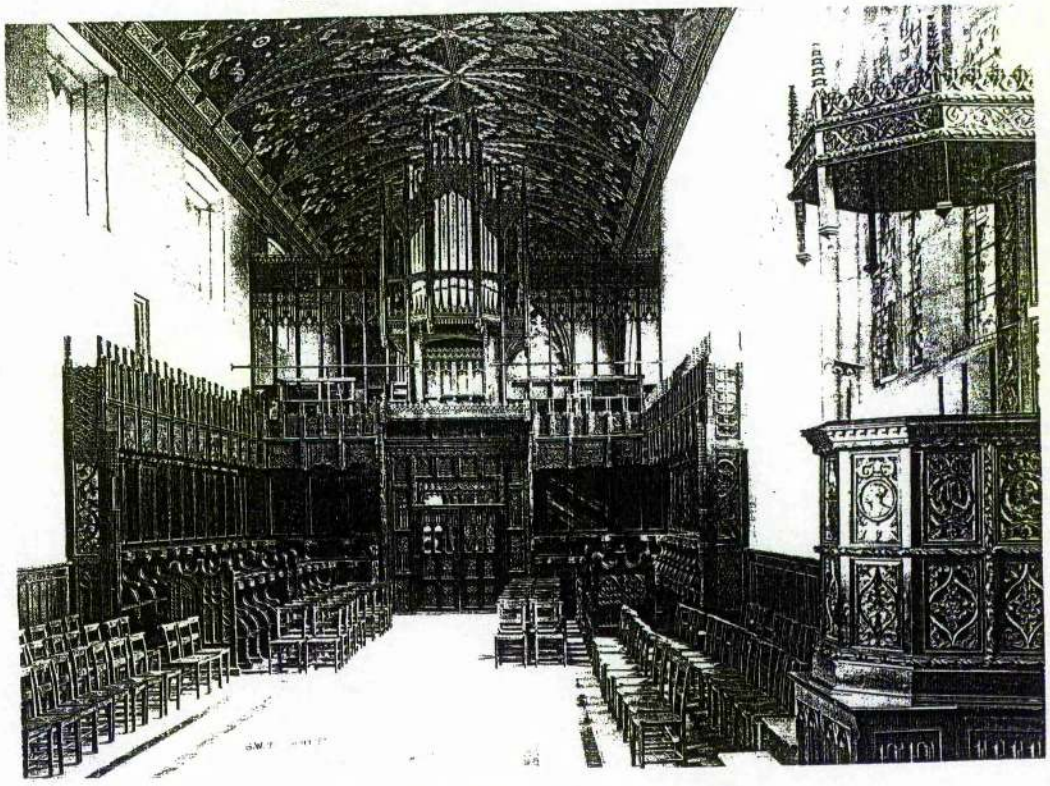
Answer (original form).



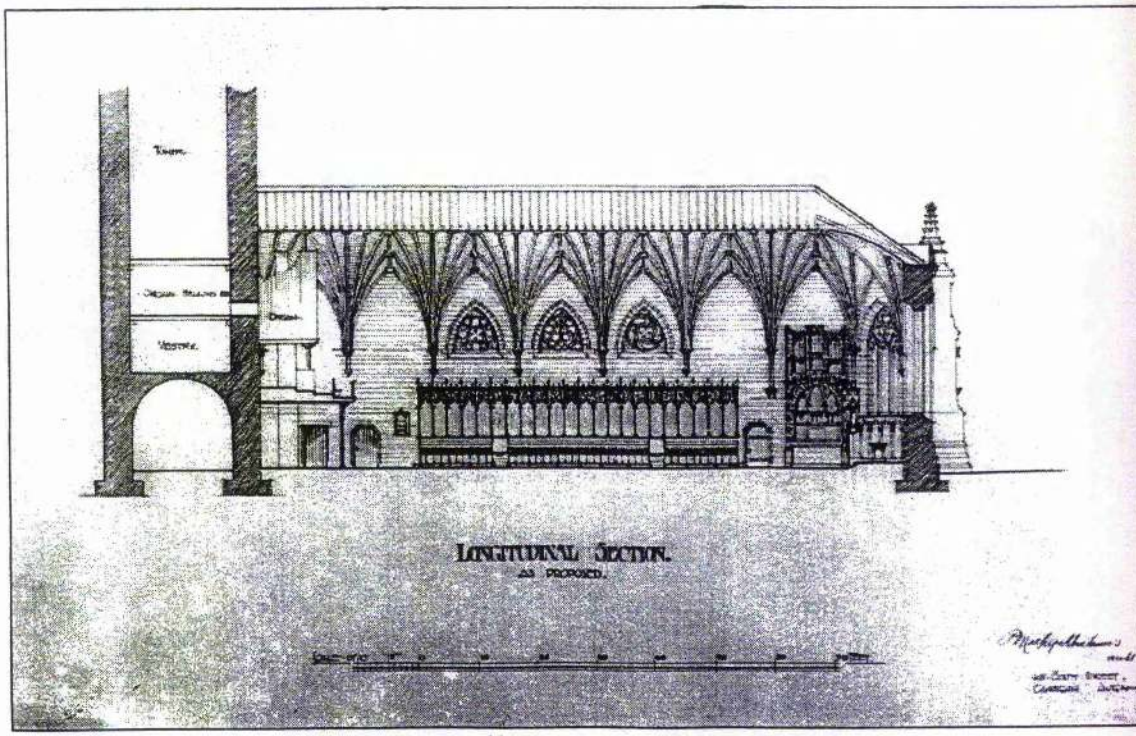
or







KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, ABERDEEN.—INTERIOR, LOOKING WEST.

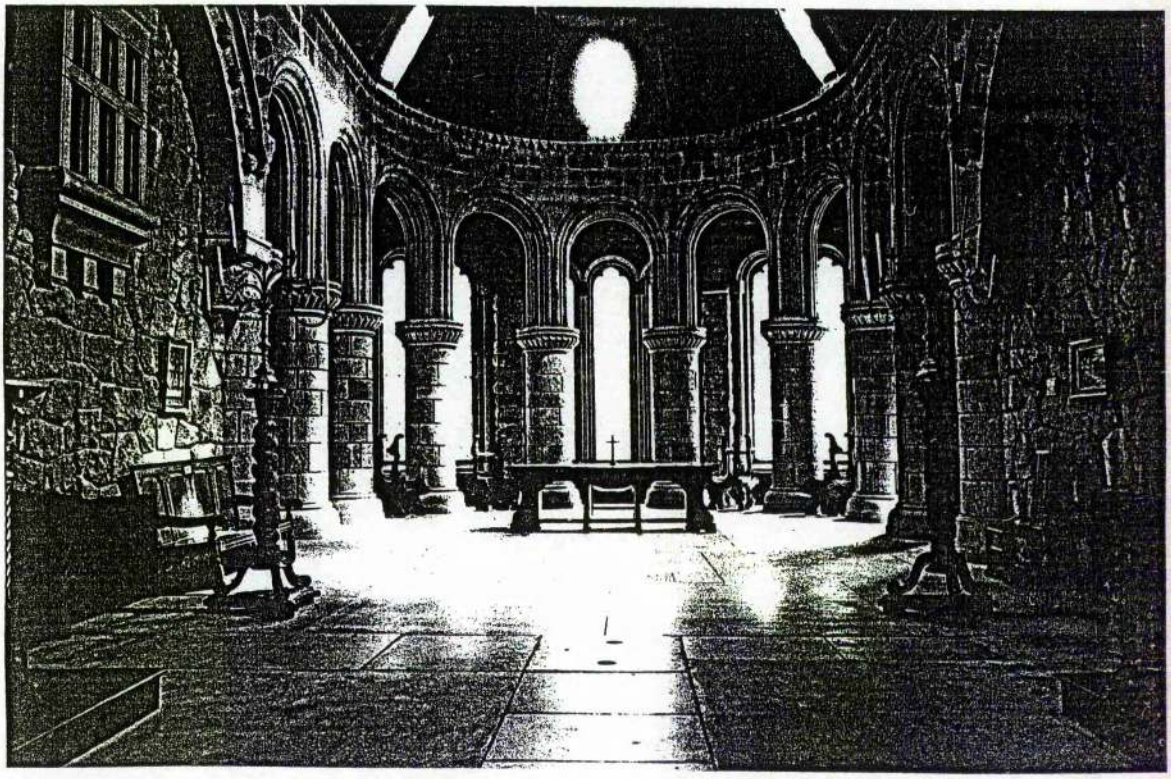


MacGregor Chalmers plan for longitudinal section of Chapel, 1914.

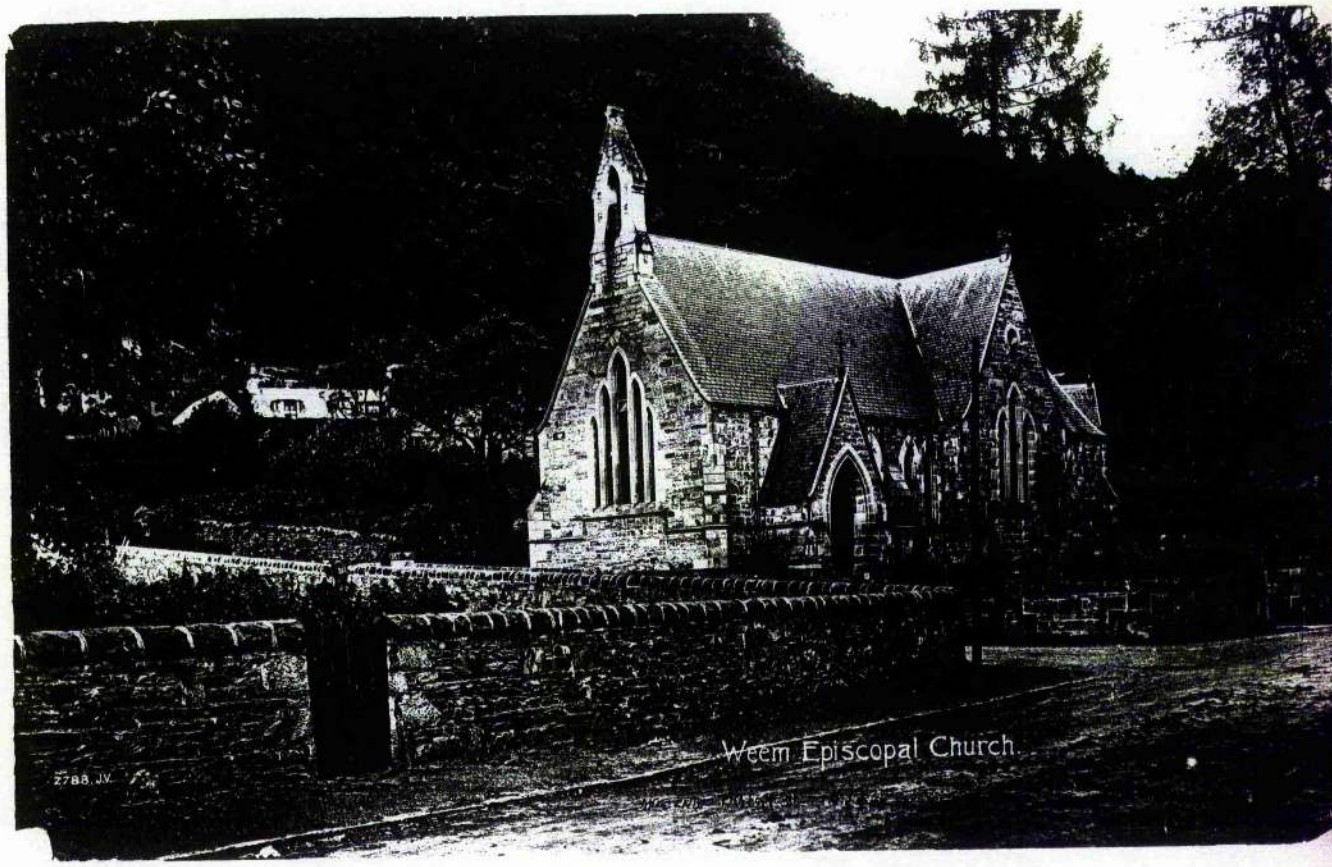
St Salvator's Chapel

St John's Episcopal Church, Jedburgh

St Conan's Kirk, Lochawe



St David's Episcopal Chapel, Weem



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